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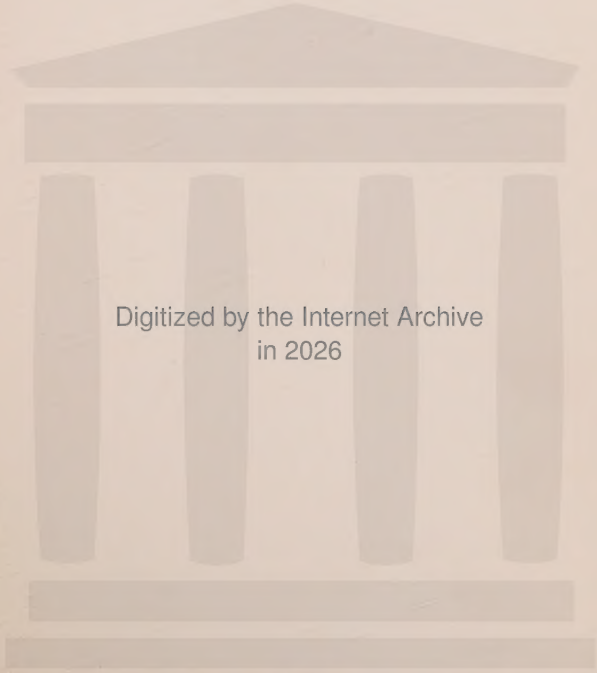

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

BY

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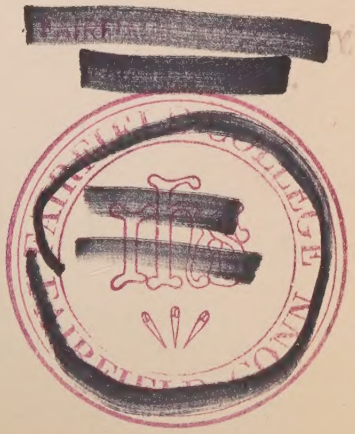

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TO

WILLIAM C. HILL

PRINCIPAL OF THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

JUN 2 3 1949

INTRODUCTION

THE AIM OF THIS BOOK

Progressive teachers are no longer satisfied with teaching English literature either as a mass of facts or as a series of isolated masterpieces. The course in the history of English literature from which so much was once expected is now felt by many teachers to be useless, unless students have a far greater background of reading than most high school students can have. The teaching of unrelated masterpieces is no longer defensible on any ground. The comprehensive type of college examination no longer stresses mere fact and mechanical analysis, and all experience has shown that the old-fashioned dissection of the "classics" kills the very thing it is supposed to stimulate, a living interest and love for literature.

Progressive teachers have come to believe that literature ought to be taught as *literature*, the revelation in artistic form of an author's vision of life, be that vision expressed in prose or poetry, lyric or epic, drama or essay, novel or satire. When students leave school they do not read bits of English literature or "classics" with notes and introductions. They read literature as they find it and where they find it. What they need for an understanding of literature, an appreciation of literature, an impulse toward good literature, is a knowledge of the literary forms as they will meet them outside the schoolroom. An interest in the history of literature, in the biographies of authors, and in the other impedimenta of scholarship is indispensable to the scholar, but of secondary importance to the man or woman who reads for what is commonly called the pleasure of reading.

This book has been prepared to meet the needs of progressive teachers of English who desire to place in the hands of their students a book which tries to teach how to read with understanding and appreciation, and which relates literature to the normal interests of young people. We have subordinated literary history and technical facts to an informal analysis of the common forms. We have provided a large variety of exercises and reading lists, so that the student may be encouraged to work for himself. We have, in general, confined our illustrative material to literature which is well known and commonly studied, in order that the book may build up on the foundation which the student is likely to possess.

Our fundamental ideas are that literature itself is the important thing, not individual works; and that a student best comes to appreciate literature if he realizes what the author is trying to do, and how he is trying to do it.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book may be used as a text in a direct course in appreciation. Regular assignments may be given and illustrative reading may be outlined as in any course.

This book may be used for collateral reading in the regular course. When *Macbeth*, for example, is being studied, the chapter on drama may be read for direct application to *Macbeth*. Or portions of the book which bear directly upon the matter in hand may be assigned. If the question of suspense arises, for example, in *The House of the Seven Gables*, helpful material will be found in the chapter on prose fiction. In studying the *Idylls of the King*, the question of sound in poetry, or images, or tone color may arise. Material may easily be found on these points in the chapter on poetry.

The book may be used as a review in the senior year after

the regular list of reading has been completed. Such review will be found useful for coördinating and reëstablishing what otherwise might be random impressions or half-shaped memories. Such a review will be found particularly valuable in preparation for college examinations which now stress power of generalization and variety of information rather than minute knowledge of minute facts.

The book may be used as a source for exercises since all the exercises either are directly based upon the books commonly read in schools or may be readily adapted to them. Used in this way, the book may help to solve the problem of outside reading, since many of the exercises may be used for reporting on books read by the student in his own time. Incidentally, the large number of quotations both in text and in exercises may be found useful for memorizing.

Finally, this book may be used to replace the regular text in the history of English literature, since it gives in compact form the essentials of such work. Time thus saved may be used for work directly with the types of literature.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We desire to express our sincere thanks to the teachers of the Springfield Central High School for many helpful suggestions.

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RALPH PHILIP BOAS
EDWIN SMITH

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

LITERATURE IN GENERAL

THE SOURCES OF INTEREST IN LITERATURE

Many people cannot understand why men and women spend time, money, and energy on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*, or Dickens's *David Copperfield*. These works are old; the facts which they contain are long out of date. Modern histories give a more accurate account of Scottish history than *Macbeth*, guide books give more definite information about the Scottish highlands than *The Lady of the Lake*, and special accounts of English social life contain more information about Englishmen than *David Copperfield*. Yet these books are bought, read, and studied by thousands of men and women, boys and girls, and, in addition, *Macbeth* still draws large audiences at the theater. Books of fact which were written in the time of Shakespeare, Scott, and Dickens have long since been forgotten. Who would study seriously a book on medicine written in 1600, or an encyclopedia compiled in 1800, or a book on electricity published in 1850?

Why do people read literature? Why do students spend years in school and college in the study of the great masters of literature? Why do publishing houses publish each year thousands of novels, plays, essays, and poems? Why do

magazines give so much space to short stories and poems? Why do people read volumes of literary criticism and literary biography?

In the first place, though one does not use literature to secure a knowledge of facts, one can use it to find how, in a certain period, men looked at facts. *Macbeth* is not a text-book of Scottish history, but it shows how Shakespeare used facts from Scottish history to interpret life for the men of Elizabethan England. *Paradise Lost* is not an authentic account of the creation of the earth, but it shows how a great Puritan of the seventeenth century who tried to

> "assert Eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to man"

looked upon the problem of the origin of sin. *A Tale of Two Cities* may not satisfy students of history as an account of the French Revolution, but it is highly interesting as Dickens's interpretation of human nature under the old French régime and during the storm and stress of the Reign of Terror. Literature, then, though it is not the best source from which to secure a knowledge of facts, is our best source for a vivid and interesting interpretation of facts as they affect people's lives. When we wish to catch the spirit of '76, we read *Paul Revere's Ride;* when we wish to understand the complexities of society in England in the mid-nineteenth century, we read Thackeray's *The Newcomes;* when we wish to understand the qualities which have made heroes of English sailors, we read Tennyson's *The Revenge.*

Perhaps the primary instinct which leads men to literature, however, is the natural human love of a story. From primitive man crouching about a fire in a cave listening with delight to the story of the killing of the hairy mammoth with stone-tipped arrows to the boy curled in an armchair by the fireplace reading with delight the story of Custer's last

stand as the Redskins circled ever nearer and nearer—from that day to this a good story has been able "to hold children from play and old men from the chimney corner." Robert Louis Stevenson, himself a master of story-telling, says:

"The desire for knowledge, I had almost added the desire for meat, is not more deeply seated than this demand for fit and striking incident. . . . A friend of mine, a Welsh blacksmith, was twenty-five years old and could neither read nor write, when he heard a chapter of *Robinson Crusoe* read aloud in a farm kitchen. Up to that moment he had sat content, huddled in his ignorance, but he left that farm another man. There were day-dreams, it appeared, divine day-dreams, written and printed and bound, and to be bought for money and enjoyed at pleasure. Down he sat that day, painfully learned to read Welsh, and returned to borrow the book. It had been lost, nor could he find another copy but one that was in English. Down he sat once more, learned English, and at length, and with entire delight, read *Robinson*. It is like the story of a love-chase."

The satisfaction of this desire for "fit and striking incident" is one of the most delightful results of literary study. The well-read man knows a world which never grows old, a world where he can choose his own friends, where he can see the life he would like to lead, where he can travel at will without trouble or expense. The reader never has "nothing to do." Life is all too short, time all too scant for reading all the books he would like to read.

Delightful as literature is, however, it has more lasting values than as a source of pleasure, amusement, and relaxation. It is, especially for the young reader, the most important source of ideas and ideals. Literature is the record of what men have thought and felt about life, and from that record the modern reader can enrich his own meager experience with the thoughts and emotions of the past. Espe-

cially important in this respect is contemporary literature, for as our modern life becomes more complex and diverse no single person can hope himself to experience all life. Yet every man wants to know more of life than lies within his grasp. The eternal spirit of youth is eagerness for experience, a great curiosity about life in the past and in the present. Three hundred and fifty years ago Christopher Marlowe expressed this spirit of youth:

> "Nature that framed us of four elements
> Warring within our breasts for regiment,
> Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds;
> Our souls whose faculties can comprehend
> The wondrous architecture of the world,
> And measure every wandering planet's course,
> Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
> And always moving as the restless spheres,
> Will us to wear ourselves and never rest."

For this eagerness for knowledge, this "divine discontent" of youth, there is no better satisfaction than the quest for and understanding of the ideas and ideals expressed in literature of the past and of the present.

Still another value of literature lies in the fact that it is, for the ordinary man, the most accessible source of beauty. A picture may be found only in a museum, a statue may be found only in a foreign city, but a book can be multiplied indefinitely and bought by anybody. In literature shines

> "The light that never was on sea or land"

through

> ". . . magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

One may never look upon the perfect form of a Grecian urn, but he can see the clear beauty that Keats pictured in his ode:

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

"Fairy Tales," by Sir James Shannon

A good story has been able "to hold children from play."

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

THE PERFECT FORM OF A GRECIAN URN

"Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return."

The appreciation of beauty in literature is cumulative. One impression of beauty leads to another and often the familiar and the commonplace

"suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange."

Finally, literature offers to the initiated the craftsman's interest, the pleasure which one takes in good work well done. The love of literature is, for many people, the love of self-expression. They would like to express in the web of words, their thoughts and moods. To see how men of genius have expressed themselves, working at their art with care and pains, is to lovers of literature a real delight, for they see in the technique of the artist the power of creation which they would like to have. The perfect phrase, the exact word, the apt image move their admiration, because, having perhaps tried themselves to write, they know how difficult good writing is. For readers with the craftsman's interest the study of such technical elements as the plot of a novel or the style of an essay stimulates the pleasure in perfection which is the mark of the creative mind which works for "the joy of the working," finding in the consciousness of achievement life's greatest reward.

What then are the sources of interest in literature? First, literature is our best means of finding out how, in any given

historical period men looked at facts, how they interpreted the world about them; second, literature best satisfies the love which all men have for good stories well told; third, literature is our most important source for a wide knowledge of the ideas and ideals which have influenced the world; fourth, literature is, for the average man, the most accessible source of beauty; and fifth, literature is a never-ending delight to those who possess the craftsman's interest.

WHAT IS GOOD LITERATURE?

Every reader is to some degree a judge. He distinguishes between a dull story and an interesting one. He has his favorite authors. Usually, however, his judgment rests upon no very intelligent basis. He seldom thinks of the reason for his likes and dislikes. He knows that there is such a thing as "good literature," that some books are usually regarded as more valuable than others, more worthy of preservation, more profitable to study, but he is content to leave to critics the definition of good literature.

It must be admitted that such a definition is extremely difficult because, after all, there is no impartial authority to tell us what is good literature and what is not. We must be our own court of judgment, trusting to our own taste, supported by the opinion of those whose discrimination we respect.

Yet there have been numerous standards maintained in the centuries of European civilization.

It has been maintained, in the first place, that good literature is that literature which is written by one who "sees life steadily and sees it whole," who tries to interpret the truth about life in as dignified and as beautiful form as possible. Such a standard emphasizes dignity, power, and beauty of subject and form. It assumes that certain master-

pieces of literary art are "classic"; that is, that they are standards of the highest achievement of literary art, and that the best method of testing a work of literature is by comparison with the "classics," these universally accepted masterpieces.[1]

A second standard of good literature, which was highly popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but is now almost completely out of fashion, is the standard of "correctness." The critics of those centuries maintained that there are certain principles or "rules" such as proportion, probability, dignity of subject matter, fidelity to the accepted beliefs of cultivated people, adherence to which, provided a writer had genius, would infallibly produce great literature. Such critics were likely to disdain any great use of the imagination or any great individuality in the application of the rules, and to approve works which were imitative of generally accepted classics, particularly the works of the ancient Greek and Roman writers.[2]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a violent reaction from such standards. Critics began to emphasize the value of the imagination in literature, and to pay small heed to the mechanical virtues of order, proportion, correctness, and fidelity to approved models. They sought for originality, power, beauty, freshness, and an avoidance of the conventional. They relied upon enthusiasm for literature rather than upon judgment, and they felt that literature ought to be enjoyed rather than analyzed.[3]

In our own day the usual standard of judgment is slightly different. Like the people of the nineteenth century we are inclined to stress the imagination as the chief quality in good literature and to admire originality, power, beauty,

[1] See Arnold, Matthew: *The Study of Poetry.*
[2] See Pope, Alexander: *Essay on Criticism.*
[3] See Hazlitt, William: *On Poetry in General.*

and freshness. But we pay more attention than they did to novelty and immediate interest and we are likely to regard literature which is surprising, startling, striking, or strange as necessarily better than that which follows beaten paths.

Students who are wise will not spend much time trying to formulate definite standards until they have a solid basis of reading. All argument aside, it is clear that there exists a large body of literature which gives pleasure to thoughtful, intelligent, and cultivated men and women and that this is good literature because the pleasure which it gives is thoughtful pleasure, not mere excitement. Good literature is not necessarily hard to read or to understand, but it does require more thought and study than that literature which has a momentary popularity because it puts the intelligence to sleep.

WHAT THE STUDY OF LITERATURE REQUIRES

The first and most important requirement in the study of literature is the ability to read more than mere words, that is, the ability to secure from the printed page the exact idea which the author wished to convey. To know just what the author meant requires, of course, a knowledge of the exact meaning of his words. Walter Pater in his essay, *Style*, says:

"Since all progress of mind consists for the most part in differentiation, in the resolution of an obscure and complex object into its component aspects, it is surely the stupidest of losses to confuse things which right reason has put asunder, to lose the sense of achieved distinctions, the distinction between poetry and prose, for instance, or, to speak more exactly, between the laws and characteristic excellencies of verse and prose composition."

It is impossible to understand this passage unless one knows exactly what Pater meant by *differentiation*, *component*

aspects, achieved distinctions, composition. More than a dictionary definition is needed. One must understand the usage of these words, their meaning in combination, and their history and derivation.

It is necessary to go further. One must understand the logical relation of this sentence to what follows it; one must have the ability to see the parts of an author's thought, giving due attention to the transitional words and phrases which the author sets up as guides.

Then, too, one must understand allusions and the figurative uses of words. When Wordsworth cries:

> ". . . . . I'd rather be
> A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn."

the reader understands but little of his meaning if he thinks that a lea is a hill, Proteus a fish, and the wreathèd horn a trombone with ribbons dangling from it.

Not only is it necessary to understand the meaning of words and phrases and the logical relation of ideas, it is necessary also to know how to read aloud with proper pronunciation, emphasis, and inflection. All good writing depends for its power upon its sound, and the student who can really appreciate what he reads can hear the sound of the language even though he is reading silently. The reader of literature must hear what he reads just as the musician hears the notes on a musical score. It is perhaps not difficult for the average reader to hear such lines of poetry as

> "By the long wash of Australasian seas"

or

> "The moan of doves in immemorial elms
> And murmuring of innumerable bees;"

but the more subtle harmonies of such a passage of prose as Cardinal Newman's *The Site of a University* need a more highly trained ear.

"He would look over the Ægean from the height he had ascended; he would follow with his eye the chain of islands, which, starting from the Sunian headland, seemed to offer the fabled divinities of Attica, when they would visit their Ionian cousins, a sort of viaduct thereto across the sea; but that fancy would not occur to him, nor any admiration of the dark violet billows with their white edges down below; nor of those graceful, fan-like jets of silver upon the rocks, which slowly rise aloft like water spirits from the deep, then shiver, and break, and spread, and shroud themselves, and disappear, in a soft mist of foam; nor of the gentle, incessant heaving and panting of the whole liquid plain; nor of the long waves, keeping steady time, like a line of soldiery, as they resound upon the hollow shore,—he would not deign to notice that restless living element at all, except to bless his stars that he was not upon it."

Above all, the study of literature requires the ability to think about what one reads, especially to see its relation to life. This requirement means that a student must read for more than amusement and relaxation; he must try to see the light which his reading throws upon his own experience. And he must cultivate a sense of beauty and excellence. William James once said, "The best claim that a college education can possibly make on your respect, the best thing it can aspire to accomplish for you, is this: that it should *help you to know a good man when you see him.*" The same thing may be said of the study of literature: it should aim to help a student to know a good book when he sees one, to distinguish between the temporary and the permanent, the artificial and the true, the flashy and the genuine, the momentarily interesting and the intrinsically beautiful.

CHAPTER II

THE FORMS OF LITERATURE

THE FORMS OF LITERATURE IN GREECE AND ROME

European literature begins with the ancient Greeks. Not only were they the first of the Europeans to produce literature of enduring power; they were also the first to analyze and classify literature. The Greeks carefully distinguished between imaginative literature and the literature which records facts. The great critic Aristotle (384–322 B. C.) calls imaginative literature "poetry" and other writing "history" and thus defines the difference between them:

"It is, moreover, evident from what has been said, that it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen. . . . The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with meter no less than without it. . . . Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular."

This is a hard definition, the full meaning of which centuries of comment have not settled. Yet it is clear from this that when the Greeks talked of "poetry" they were not thinking of writing in verse as opposed to writing in prose; they were thinking of imaginative or creative literature as opposed to the recording of facts. To be sure, all Greek imaginative literature was written in verse, and consequently the distinction which we make between poetry and prose

rather than between "poetry" and "history" had no value for them.

The Greeks divided "poetry" into three divisions, epic, lyric, and dramatic, divisions based upon literature as their critics found it.

The epic literature consisted of the stories of the Greeks at the dawn of their history as they were worked into the two great poems attributed to Homer: the *Iliad*, the story of the events which took place in the tenth year of the siege of Troy (Ilion) and the *Odyssey*, the story of the wanderings of the Greek hero Odysseus after the fall of Troy. Containing stories of the heroes of their race, legends of their gods, and accounts of strange men and lands, these poems possessed for the Greeks the same importance which we attach to the Bible. Naturally the epic form was regarded as a form of great dignity and power. Critics carefully analyzed the epics, drawing from them rules which were regarded as standard literary doctrine and which in later centuries came to have a most important influence.

The epic was defined as a poem which was recited. It was required that an epic have a theme of dignity or even grandeur, that it be carefully planned to secure perfect unity, and that it move steadily in regular progress toward its end. The various devices used in the Homeric poems were regarded as part of the epic manner: the invocation to the muses with which the epics begin; the catalogue on the model of the catalogue of the ships in the *Iliad;* the mighty struggles between two heroic champions; the interposition of the gods in human affairs; and such matters of style as the surging roll of the dactylic hexameter, the long elaborate Homeric simile, the conventional epithet such as "crafty Odysseus" and the "wine-dark sea." So, to-day, we use the word "epic" not only to mean the two great Greek poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but poems of other peoples modeled

upon them, such as the Roman Virgil's *Æneid*, or poems which have been influenced by their characteristics such as the Italian Dante's *Divine Comedy* or the English Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Then, too, we use the term to apply to heroic stories which come from the early history of other peoples though these stories never were influenced by the Greek epics, stories like the Old English *Beowulf*. A third use of the term is in application to those stories, whether in verse or in prose, which have plots covering many aspects of life, and many characters which are representative of types of people rather than individuals. We speak, for instance, of a novel of "epic proportions" or of a novel as an "epic of the war" with reference chiefly to its size and breadth of interest.

As the term epic has come to be used in the study of literature, then, it has the following uses: it refers to the Greek epic poems, to poems of other peoples modeled upon or influenced by them, to primitive stories of national heroes which have never been influenced by Greek literature, and finally to stories of heroic proportions and a wide field of plot and character.

The second division of creative literature, or "poetry" according to the Greeks, was lyric poetry. Lyric poetry was intended not to be recited like the epic, but sung to the accompaniment of the lyre (hence, *lyric*), either by a single voice or by a chorus. The Greek lyric poems gave expression to the poet's mood, to his hopes, fears, and longings, his love, patriotism, and rejoicing. The two most famous of the Greek lyric poets were Sappho (sixth century B. C.) and Pindar (died 443 B. C.). Sappho was a woman of Lesbos, most of whose poems have been lost. Enough survive, however, to show her greatness as a poet of love. Pindar was a Theban poet. His most famous poems are *Odes of Victory*, poems in honor of the victors of the great Greek games. They are written in a brilliant and daring imaginative style

full of bold figures and striking language. They make frequent use of heroic myths and are marked by strong religious feeling and dignified moral sentiments.

The third division of imaginative literature, dramatic poetry, was the crowning glory of Greek literature. The Greek drama began as song and dance by a chorus in honor of Dionysus, the Greek god of the spirit of life and joy. The early song and dance were developed by the addition of speeches between the leader of the chorus and the members of the chorus. Later other actors were added, but the chorus and their songs formed the basis of the Greek drama, which really consisted of recitation and formal dialogue rather than of dramatic action as we understand it to-day.

The Greeks distinguished carefully between tragedy and comedy. Tragedy they regarded as a dramatic poem of great seriousness representing an important event at a critical time in the life of a person or persons of exalted rank. The outcome of this event was always melancholy. The style of tragic poetry was necessarily elevated. To the Greeks a tragic play was of religious significance presented not for amusement but for the illumination of the most serious issues of life.

Greek tragedy was developed to its highest point at Athens by the great dramatists Æschylus (525–456 B. C.), Sophocles (495 (or 6)–406 B. C.), and Euripides (480–406 B. C.). The plots of Greek tragedy were taken from the old stories of gods and heroes. By means of these familiar stories the dramatists set forth their themes of the inevitability of punishment for sin, of the tragic overturn of mighty men who felt themselves too secure in their high position, of the heroism of devoted womanhood, and of the pain and woe of war.

Comedy the Greeks regarded as light and amusing drama the object of which was to satirize the weaknesses, vices, and follies of contemporary society.

Greek comedy is divided into two types, the Old Comedy of Aristophanes (c. 450–c. 380 B. C.) and the New Comedy of Menander (c. 320–c. 250 B. C.). The comedies of Aristophanes are elaborate burlesques and satires of contemporary social, intellectual, and political movements. The comedies of Menander, on the other hand, are more faithful representations of the follies and weaknesses of the social life of the time.

A further development of Greek literature of great importance in the history of literary types is the poetry of Theocritus, who lived in Syracuse in the third century B. C., and his contemporaries Bion and Moschus. To these writers are attributed little "idyls," delicate and lifelike sketches of Greek life; pastorals, little descriptions of the life and loves of shepherds; and elegies, songs of mourning for a friend written as if both author and friend were shepherds. This pastoral poetry had, historically, a steady influence. It was copied by Roman poets and in much later times in Europe proved a continual source of poetic inspiration.

Still another portion of Greek literature the influence of which continues to our own time is the *Greek Anthology*, a collection of Greek poems the earliest of which date from 700 B. C. and the latest of which is assigned to 1000 A. D. These little poems have such crispness, grace, spontaneity, and condensation of style and such interest, pathos, and variety of subject that they have never lost their charm.

Of Greek prose writers, the orator Demosthenes, the historian Thucydides, the critic and scientist Aristotle, and the philosopher Plato established forms of prose literature which long endured as typical. Aristotle and Plato were influential not only because of the form of their writings, but because of their ideas. The analysis and classifications which Aristotle made of Greek literature have, since their rediscovery

in Europe in the fifteenth century, profoundly influenced European literature, especially the drama. Critics in Italy, France, and England made rules for the drama which they based upon their understanding of his *Poetics*. The most famous of these rules are the so-called "unities." Aristotle quite rightly insisted that a dramatic plot should be unified ("unity of action"), and mentioned that in his day—seventy years after the death of Euripides—dramatists limited the time represented in their plays to "one revolution of the sun."

On the basis of these statements European critics at a much later time argued that a play should have unity of action; that it should represent the duration of twenty-four hours, twelve hours, or even, as some extremists maintained, the actual time of representation on this stage; and that its action should occur in but one place. Such "unities," of course, except the "unity of action," have no value as dramatic laws, even though they had been stated by Aristotle, which they were not.

Plato (427 B. C.–347 B. C.) was the greatest of the ancient philosophers. Practically all his works are in the form of dialogues which purport to reproduce the conversations between the philosopher Socrates and his friends. In these dialogues are set forth ideas of the nature of truth, of love, of the immortality of the soul, and of the ideal state, ideas which have for centuries captivated the minds of poets and thinkers.

With the decline of Greek national power the center of literary interest in the ancient world passed to Rome.

The earliest writers of importance in establishing forms of literature in Rome were the writers of comedy Plautus (c. 254 B. C.–184 B. C.) and Terence (c. 190 B. C.–c. 159 B. C.) Their plays were based upon the Greek New Comedy, the plays of Terence being direct reproductions of Menander.

The plays of Plautus are boisterous and full of action and humor. They present certain stock situations and certain stock characters like the miser, the boastful soldier, the parasite, the intriguing slave, and the spendthrift, which were, apparently, very popular. The plays of Terence were less popular with Roman audiences, but their grace and charm have always pleased readers of dramatic literature. In the sixteenth century the plays of Plautus and Terence served as models for many playwrights. Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* is a direct adaptation of a Plautian comedy.

The Latin writers who had most influence upon later forms of literature were the men who lived at the height of the glory of Roman power—in the first century B. C. and the first century A. D.

Cicero (106 B. C.–43 B. C.), orator, essayist, and letter writer, made of Latin prose a medium for the expression of ideas that was dignified, stately, and polished. Virgil (70 B. C.–19 B. C.), carried on the tradition of pastoral poetry begun by Theocritus in the *Eclogues* or *Bucolics;* wrote poetry about agriculture in the *Georgics;* and in the *Æneid* produced a great narrative poem of the founding of Rome modeled after the Homeric epics. This poem was, in later times, regarded as the great example of the epic form in its perfection. As Virgil became the standard epic poet, Horace (65 B. C.–8 B. C.), became by reason of his *Carmina* or "Odes" the standard lyric poet. In polished, graceful poems he expressed so perfectly the thoughts and feelings of the cultivated, sophisticated man of the world that twenty centuries later his work seems as fresh and lively as on the day that he wrote it, at ease on his Sabine farm. A most important work of Horace is his *De Arte Poetica*, an essay on criticism in poetic form. This essay furnished to later times numerous literary precepts such as the admonition to preserve harmony and unity in imaginative literature, the dic-

tum that literature ought to furnish both pleasure and instruction to the reader, and the rule that plays should be divided into five acts.

Seneca (c. 4 B. C.–65 A. D.), exercised in later times a great influence upon English literature by his tragedies written in imitation of the Greek tragedies. They were probably never intended to be acted. Yet fifteen hundred years later they seemed to critics a striking example of dignity and power, and they had an important share in the development of the drama of Shakespeare's day.

In the course of time the Roman power declined before the attacks of the Teutonic tribes, and the civilization of classic antiquity became only a memory. Though Latin remained the language of the Catholic Church which grew strong as the old empire weakened, the literature of the ancient world grew fainter and fainter in men's minds until it was lost in the Dark Ages to be rediscovered in the Renaissance.

SUMMARY

The forms of literature in Greece and Rome

I Poetry (imaginative literature)
  A. The epic
    1. The early stories of national life
      The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*
    2. The carefully constructed literary epic on the model of the Homeric poems
      The *Æneid*
  B. Lyric poetry
    1. Love songs
      Sappho
    2. Odes
      a. Songs of victory in elaborate form
        Pindar
      b. Short and simple poems of personal feeling and reflection
        Horace

3. Pastoral poetry—idyls and elegies
   Theocritus
   Virgil
4. Miscellaneous short poems of varied types
   The *Greek Anthology*

C. Dramatic poetry
1. Greek drama
   a. Tragedy
      Æschylus
      Sophocles
      Euripides
   b. Comedy
      1. Old comedy (satire of political and intellectual life)
         Aristophanes
      2. New comedy (satire of domestic life)
         Menander
2. Roman drama
   a. Tragedy (imitations of Greek tragedy, for reading, not for acting)
      Seneca
   b. Comedy (imitations of Greek domestic comedy)
      Plautus
      Terence

II. Non-imaginative literature
A. Criticism
   Aristotle
   Horace
B. Oratory
   Demosthenes
   Cicero
C. Philosophy
   Plato
D. History
   Herodotus
   Thucydides
   Tacitus
   Livy

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM THE BEGINNINGS TO 1550

The oldest work in English literature is the epic of *Beowulf*, a narrative poem which was composed at a time before the English went to Britain. Its form is a natural development with no hint of an acquaintance on the part of the author or authors with the epics of Greece and Rome. It tells a tale of a national hero, of his overcoming a half-human monster who was devastating his land and of his victory in later years over a fearful dragon. *Beowulf* is only one example of a native epic literature widespread among the Germanic peoples until after their migrations from the German forests and marshes to form new nations in France and England. Among the Teutonic peoples who remained in their native land the epic literature survived. In the nineteenth century it furnished the German musician Wagner with the stories for his mighty operas.

The successor to the epic was the "romance," the principal literary form of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the age of knighthood, chivalry, and feudalism. The romances, so called because they were written chiefly in the Romance languages, especially in French and Spanish, are elaborate stories in prose and poetry of marvels and adventures written with little regard for probability and with no historic sense. The romancer wanted a tale which would interest a group of knights and ladies; he used traditional stories and characters with no knowledge of and no feeling for historical accuracy. At their best, the romances give us interesting pictures of adventure in a world of chivalry, adventures colored by the glamor of an unreal world; at their worst, they give us wordy jumbles of impossible events constructed with no sense of artistic form.

The romances may be divided as follows:

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

THE PARTHENON

Even in its ruins the Parthenon shows the stately dignity and the calm power of Greek art.

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THEATER OF DIONYSUS AT ATHENS

In this theater under sunny skies were played the Greek tragedies, "the crowning glory of Greek literature."

1. Classical: stories based upon the heroes and the events of Greek and Roman antiquity, such as the life of Alexander or the tale of Troy.

2. Arthurian romance: stories based upon the legends of King Arthur and the Round Table. The most famous collection of these romances in English is the *Morte D'Arthur*, a translation and adaptation of older material by Sir Thomas Malory.

3. French romance: stories of French heroes such as Charlemagne and Huon of Bordeaux.

4. English romance: Bevis of Hampton, Havelok the Dane.

5. German romance: the *Niebelungenlied.*

The romance as a type could not endure. It was developed from a transient phase of society, the age of chivalry; it existed primarily for entertainment; it depended for its interest upon a background of adventure, marvel, and mystery with no real sense for truth; and it was lacking in all structural qualities. In time it degenerated into mere foolishness and was finally laughed out of existence. Cervantes' satire, *Don Quixote,* shows how in the Renaissance it had fallen from its high estate.

While the romance was flourishing in the courtly circles of chivalry, the growing influence of the Church was bringing into literature the element of instruction. Religious men realized in the middle ages, as they have realized always, that for instruction there was no vehicle equal to that of a story. Moreover there was in men's minds practically no realization of the difference between history and narrative literature. The distinction between "poetry" and "history" which formed the basis of Aristotle's criticism was unknown to the men of the middle ages. An imaginative story they regarded as falsehood unless it were told for purposes of moral instruction. Hence rose the idea

of allegory, a form of narrative in which the characters personified virtues and vices or ethical ideals. Illustrations of such allegories are to be found in the medieval stories of animals and in stories in which ideals of courtly love were symbolized by various conventional characters. Gradually these simple allegories became highly elaborated. In the thirteenth century the Italian poet Dante (1265-1302) wrote the greatest of all allegories, the *Divine Comedy*, a magnificent poem relating the poet's imaginary experiences in Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. In this poem every incident and every character has an inner meaning; the entire poem has a political, an ethical, and a personal interpretation. The *Divine Comedy* became the greatest poem of the middle ages, summing up for the men of that time the whole of their intellectual and religious experience.

In England the allegory was highly popular. The great example of this form before 1550 is *Piers Plowman*, a powerful allegory of social conditions in the fourteenth century formerly attributed to William Langland, but now believed to be the work of several writers.

In addition to the three types — national epic, romance, and allegory — there flourished before 1550 a large variety of minor types of literature: the *exemplum*, a moral tale illustrating some ethical truth, much used by popular preachers; the *fabliau*, a coarse and humorous tale of vulgar life; and the *saint's legend*, a tale of a miracle in the life of a Christian saint. Lyrical poetry in the forms of songs and carols was present in English literature from the earliest times.

The best way of understanding the variety of types of English literature at the end of the middle ages is to study the works of the great English poet Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340–1400). Chaucer wrote lyrics, several of which were in the popular French forms of rondel and ballade,

e. g., *Fortune*, *Merciles Beaute*, and *The Compleint of Chaucer to his empty Purse;* allegories, *e. g.*, *Hous of Fame;* fabliaux, *e. g.*, *The Miller's Tale;* courtly romances, *e. g.*, *The Knight's Tale;* a burlesque romance, *Sir Thopas;* saints' legends, *e. g. The Second Nun's Tale;* a beast fable, *The Nun's Priest's Tale;* and many other types. He popularized in his *Canterbury Tales* the idea, begun in Italy by Boccaccio (1313–1375), of a series of tales fitted into a framework and supposed to be told by various members of a company of people for their common diversion.

Before 1550 are found also the beginnings of the drama. Modern European drama had its beginnings not in Greek and Roman drama which, after the decay of Roman civilization, seem to have been practically forgotten, but in short Latin dialogues introduced into the church services at Christmas and Easter. Thence was but a step to the dramatized stories of the Biblical narrative which we know as "mystery" or "miracle plays," and from them to the dramatized allegories which we know as "morality plays." The immense popularity of these crude plays led before 1550 to dramatized stories of history, which we know as "chronicle plays" and dramatized fabliaux or "farces."

One other literary type needs mention, the "popular ballads," little stories in verse which were sung or recited by simple, unlearned people about a national hero like Robin Hood, about such exploits in border warfare as *The Battle of Otterburn*, about superstitious tales of ghosts or enchantment like *The Wife of Usher's Well* and *Kemp Owyne*, or about legends of treachery, murder, and cruelty like *Lord Randal*, *Edward*, and *The Cruel Brother*. The origin of these ballads is obscure. They are anonymous, they were handed down orally for many generations, they are simple and crude in story and highly condensed and dramatic in presentation. Many of them sound as if they

had been recited or sung by a leader with his hearers joining in the chorus. *Alliterative formulas* are common:

> "When shaws beene sheene, and shradds full fayre,
> And leeves both large and longe;"

> "Me thought they did me beate and binde."

Conventional epithets are common: "fayre forest;" "merry greenwood;" "wealthy wife;" "blude-reid wine." *Incremental repetition* is common:

> "They hadna been a week from her
> A week but barely ane". . .

> "They hadna been a week from her
> A week but barely three". . .

These characteristics are all marks of traditional poetry of great age, of interest to simple people, and adapted to group singing and reciting. The same characteristics can be seen in children's games to-day.

It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that ballads were brought to the attention of educated readers and of students of poetry. Then their freshness, their spontaneity, their vigor, and their condensation made them highly influential in their effect upon narrative poetry, and "literary ballads," narrative poems influenced by the old forms, became more and more common.

The following outline will give some idea of the main types of English literature which flourished before 1550:

I. Lyrical poetry
  Songs, carols, and imitations of French forms

II. Narrative poetry
  a. Epic
    Beowulf

b. Romance
Arthurian romances
c. Allegory
Piers Plowman
d. Religious narratives such as the saints' legends
e. Fabliau
Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*
f. Ballad
English and Scottish popular ballads

III. Drama
a. Miracle and mystery plays
b. Moralities
c. Chronicle plays
d. Farces

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM 1550–1660

Poetry

After 1550 the English people began to feel the full effect of the Renaissance, that great expansive movement in every field of life which so profoundly changed European civilization. The invention of printing, the discovery of new lands, the breaking down of old habits of life, the rise of the national spirit, the stirring changes in religious organization and beliefs, the new interest in art—all these phases of the Renaissance were influential in modernizing English literature. But the greatest effect of the Renaissance upon the development of forms in English literature came from that aspect which we call "the revival of learning," the discovery, interpretation, and translation of the Greek and Roman classics. Now for the first time there was available for English writers a great literature in which the sense of form was preëminent and of which there existed, in the *Poetics* of Aristotle and the *Art of Poetry* of Horace, a careful

and well-reasoned criticism. The first discoverers and interpreters of the classic literatures were the Italians, and it was upon the Italian interpreters of the classics that Englishmen leaned in the sixteenth century. In addition to the influence of the classics, the native English inheritance deepened and widened.

In 1557 was published a little book edited by a certain Tottel, a publisher, called *Songs and Sonnets*, but now generally known as *Tottel's Miscellany*. In this little book are the first poems to show the distinctly modern influences in lyrical poetry. The native lyric strain blossoms forth into poetry of deep and sincere personal expression. The men of the time seem to have a new and exuberant gift of melody and beauty, and for the next hundred years the song flourished as never before or since. One reason for this lyrical outburst was the fact that the new interest in drama constantly demanded new songs to be set to music. This combination of music and poetry is reflected particularly in the beautiful songs which appear in Shakespeare's plays.

But the native English music was to be tempered by the influence of the odes of Horace. Charmed by their urbanity, regularity, grace, and neatness, such writers as Ben Jonson (1573–1637) and Robert Herrick (1591–1674) wrote lyrical poems which for courtly compliment and elegant grace are unsurpassed in English literature.

In the seventeenth century Shakespeare's "native wood-notes wild" and Jonson's recapturing of classic perfection were not to hold the field alone. In revolt against sweetness and classic charm, John Donne (1573–1631) developed a type of lyric poetry which consciously aims at roughness and cynicism in thought and expression. His example was followed by the so-called "metaphysical poets" who carried extravagance and artificiality to a last extreme in

the use of tortured figures of speech or "conceits" and often printed the lines of their poems in such forms as an altar or a pair of wings.

With these new types of lyrical poetry went an outburst of interest in the writing of the sonnet. This form of lyrical expression was originated in Italy by Petrarch (1304–1374) who used it to sing the praises of the "lovely Laura." Sonnets were first written in English by Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–1542) and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (c. 1517–1547) whose poems appear in *Tottel's Miscellany*. In the second half of the sixteenth century the form had an immense vogue, being brought to perfection by Shakespeare. At this period the sonnet form consisted of fourteen iambic pentameter lines falling by their rhymes into three quatrains and a concluding couplet. This is called the Elizabethan sonnet. In the seventeenth century when interest in these sonnets waned, Milton revived the form in its modern arrangement of octave and sestet. This is called the Italian sonnet.

Elizabethan sonnet:

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes	a
I all alone beweep my outcast state	b
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries	a
And look upon myself and curse my fate,	b
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,	c
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,	d
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,	c
With what I most enjoy contented least;	d
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,	e
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,	f
Like to the lark at break of day arising	e
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;	f
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings	g
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.	g

Shakespeare

Italian sonnet:

octave	When I consider how my light is spent	a
	Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,	b
	And that one talent which is death to hide	b
↓	Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent	a
↑	To serve therewith my Maker, and present	a
	My true account, lest he returning chide,	b
	"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"	b
	I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent	a
sestet	That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need	c
	Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best	d
↓	Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state	e
↑	Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed	c
	And post o'er land and ocean without rest;	d
	They also serve who only stand and wait."	e

Milton

A third form of lyrical poetry, the ode, came into English literature with the increasing knowledge of classic literature. Abraham Cowley (1618–1667) conceived of the classic ode as a series of stanzas each made up of irregular lines, written upon some serious and dignified theme in highly rhetorical language. His so-called "Pindaric odes," named from the famous Greek poet Pindar, became fashionable, and all the poets of any standing in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries tried their hands at them. The ode in a form nearer to the classic practice had to wait until the late eighteenth century with Thomas Gray.

A fourth form of lyric poetry was the pastoral elegy written under the influence of the Greek poet Theocritus. Milton's *Lycidas* is the best example.

Many minor forms of lyric poetry imitative of the poems of the classics appear. One of the most interesting of these is the marriage hymn, well illustrated by the glowing *Prothalamion* and *Epithalamion* of Edmund Spenser (1552–1599).

Narrative poetry continued to flourish after 1550 in many forms. One of the most common was the long narrative poem

on a classical subject written with a wealth of elaborate detail. A good example is the *Venus and Adonis* of Shakespeare.

Pastoral poetry was also common. Spenser's *The Shepherd's Calendar*, modeled upon the various idyls of Theocritus, set the fashion for a variety of forms of pastoral poetry which to-day have a merely curious interest.

The allegory lost ground, though it received new splendor at the hands of Spenser in his long and intricate romance-allegory *The Faerie Queene* which in its varied and elaborate beauty is almost an epic of the early Renaissance in England. The poem had a striking influence upon later writers especially because of the effective "Spenserian stanza" which Spenser invented:

> "And, more to lulle him in his slumber soft,
> A trickling streame from high rock tumbling downe,
> And ever-drizling raine upon the loft,
> Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
> Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swowne.
> No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cryes,
> As still are wont t'annoy the walled towne,
> Might there be heard; but carelesse Quiet lyes,
> Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enimyes."

A new type of poetry, developed at the end of the great creative years from 1550 to 1660, is descriptive poetry, well illustrated by Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. These poems became rapidly popular and in later years exercised an important influence upon the development of English literature.

Prose

After the Renaissance prose began to take its place as a vehicle of creative literature. Early prose was clumsy and involved. Lacking the restraining influence which meter exercised over poetry, prose could spread itself at will over a subject, with no control but the caprice of the writer.

Seventeenth century prose often has great rhythmic beauty as in the *Religio Medici* of Sir Thomas Browne (1605–1682), epigrammatic terseness as in the *Essays* of Francis Bacon (1561–1626), intellectual power as in the *Areopagitica* of John Milton (1608–1674), and colloquial grace as in *The Complete Angler* of Isaak Walton (1593–1683). On the whole, however, English prose did not assume its modern form until after 1660. The prose of the years 1550–1660 was still in the formative stage—it had not acquired the qualities which are valued in modern prose: clearness, ease, simplicity, and adaptability. It was overmastered by the soaring imagination of the Renaissance, and often seems to the modern reader too fanciful, quaint, shapeless, and heavy to be of more than historic interest.

One great contribution, however, was made by Francis Bacon in the essay.

The essay was first developed as a genuine literary form in France by Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592). His *Essais* are thoughts about life written in a pleasant, informal style. The form was introduced into England by Francis Bacon whose *Essays*, short reflections upon such abstract matters as "Truth," "Studies," and the like, were published in 1597 and again in enlarged form in 1612 and 1625. A different type of essay, the "Character," a short analysis of some common type of personality, was developed in the seventeenth century, notably by Thomas Overbury (1581–1613).

Drama

After 1550 the drama reached a height never equaled and never surpassed in English literature. The early drama lacked variety, dignity, form, and emotional truth. It was crude in substance and in expression. To reach perfection the drama needed a settled place in English life, a vehicle

of expression suited to its needs, a sense of form, and dramatists who saw life vividly and truthfully. All these things came with the Renaissance. The comedy of Plautus and Terence, the tragedy of Seneca, and the criticism of Aristotle and Horace gave a sense of literary art; the blank verse of Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) gave a literary medium which was brought to perfection by Shakespeare; the establishing of theatrical companies and the building of theaters in London created a steady demand for plays; and the "spacious times" of Elizabeth, times rich in color, energy, discovery, change, and, above all, national enthusiasm, brought to London a group of dramatic writers such as the world has never seen in a single nation at a single time. Within less than fifty years after the first modern English comedy and tragedy were played, English drama was enriched by a bewildering variety of dramatic forms. As Polonius says in *Hamlet:* "The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light."

The editors of the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays (1623) divided his plays into three groups: comedies, histories, and tragedies. This will serve well enough as a workable division of dramatic literature after 1550.

To the Elizabethan a tragedy was, generally, a play which depicted the unhappy fate of persons of high rank or of important position in the state. The downfall of these persons was brought about sometimes by circumstance over which they had no control, sometimes by some fault within their own natures. Often the action of the tragedy was bound up with the fate of a nation; often it was influenced by supernatural agencies. It always ended unhappily, usually with the death of the chief characters. Such motives

as treachery, tyranny, and revenge were common. The tone of tragedy was dignified and serious though comic scenes might be used for relief; and the blank verse in which they were composed was often of great beauty and power.

Elizabethan tragedy may be divided into three groups: romantic tragedy, typified by Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, the tragedy of great romantic personalities; classical tragedy, typified by Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, the tragic story taken from Roman sources and modeled upon Roman tragedy; and domestic tragedy, typified by Thomas Heywood's (c.1581–1640?) *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, a sensational story based on contemporary crime.

The Elizabethan history play is dramatized history based upon the popular histories of the period such as Holinshed's *Chronicle* or Plutarch's *Lives*. History plays were usually tragic in their nature, often with a strong admixture of comedy, and differed from tragedy chiefly in their lack of a definite and compelling structure of plot. The tremendous patriotism and national pride roused by the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 gave a great impetus to plays based upon England's past. Shakespeare's *Richard III*, *King John*, and *Henry V* are history plays in which the interest in political complications and national glory is the dominating element.

Comedy for the Elizabethans was of various types. Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* is an out-and-out farce in which the humor of mistaken identity is worked beyond all probability. Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* are romantic comedy, stressing not so much humor as gayety and joy. The characters are well-born, the emotion is refined, and final happiness after difficulty is the basic theme. Romantic comedy often has elements of sadness as in *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Winter's Tale*, but the ending is always happy. Ben Jonson developed in *Volpone* and *The*

Alchemist the satirical "comedy of humors." His theory was twofold: that men are often overmastered by a single trait or "humor" such as credulity or greed, and that human nature is usually mean and low. There is in Jonson little gayety or beauty. His satire is sharp and cynical.

One lesser type of dramatic literature needs mention: the masque. The masque was really a theatrical entertainment depending for its effect upon song, dance, scenery, and pageantry rather than upon genuine dramatic qualities of plot, characters, or dialogue. The great writer of masques was Ben Jonson, though the masque most familiar to students of literature is Milton's *Comus*, acted in 1634.

The chief forms of literature developed between 1550 and 1660 may be summarized as follows:

I. Poetry
  a. Lyrical poetry
    1. Song—Shakespeare, Jonson, Donne, Herrick
    2. Sonnet—Sidney, Shakespeare, Milton
    3. Ode—Cowley
    4. Elegy—Milton
  b. Narrative poetry
    1. Allegory—Spenser: *Faerie Queene*
    2. Long narrative—Shakespeare: *Venus and Adonis;* Marlowe: *Hero and Leander*
    3. Pastoral poetry—Spenser: *Shepherd's Calendar*
  c. Descriptive poetry
    Milton: *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*

II. Prose
  a. Essay
    Bacon: *Essays*
  b. Miscellaneous prose
    1. History
      Hakluyt: *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics and Discoveries of the English Nation*
    2. Varied forms
      Browne: *Religio Medici*
      Walton: *The Complete Angler*

III. Drama
  a. Tragedy
    Norton and Sackville: *Gorborduc or Ferrex and Porrex*
    Marlowe: *Tamburlaine*
    Shakespeare: *Macbeth, Hamlet*
    Jonson: *Sejanus*
    Beaumont and Fletcher: *The Maid's Tragedy*
    Heywood: *A Woman Killed with Kindness*
  b. History
    Shakespeare: *King John, Henry V*
  c. Comedy
    1. Romantic comedy
      Shakespeare: *As you Like It*
    2. Comedy of Humors
      Jonson: *Every Man in His Humour*
  d. Masque
    Milton: *Comus*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM 1660 TO 1740

The sixteenth century in England was a time of great expansion. Discovery, exploration, invention, travel, commerce, science—in all fields men's minds were active as never before in the world's history. In literature this intellectual activity showed itself in a wide extension of its scope, producing the complete works of Spenser and Shakespeare and the early works of Milton.

Early in the seventeenth century, however, the impetus of the Renaissance wore itself out. New questions of religion and of government centering in the great movement which we call Puritanism, began to occupy men's minds to the exclusion of literary interests. These questions culminated in the Puritan Revolution which executed Charles I, banished his family from England, centered political power in the English Parliament, and almost completely repressed literature and art. In 1642 the theaters were closed, and until King Charles II returned from France in 1660, English

literature, except for the pamphlets of Milton on political and social questions, was practically at a standstill.

In 1660, however, began another active literary period, now called the Restoration, or—after its chief literary figure —the age of Dryden. From 1700 to 1740 a new generation was writing which continued the traditions established in the age of Dryden. This is called the Queen Anne period, or—after its chief literary figure—the age of Pope.

After 1660 the men of letters no longer saw life in the old way. The enthusiasms of the Elizabethan age were now gone; Spenser became a dim figure of the past; Shakespeare was thought of as a genius, but rough and careless in workmanship. The literary men of the Restoration wanted the imagination controlled and organized. Spontaneity, originality, variety, novelty—all these qualities were in disrepute. An "age of prose and reason" was beginning. "A fit prose was a necessity; but it was impossible that a fit prose should establish itself . . . without some touch of frost to the imaginative life of the soul. The needful qualities for a fit prose are regularity, uniformity, precision, balance."

These qualities are exemplified in the work of John Dryden (1631–1700) whose influence was uppermost from 1660 to 1700. He modernized English prose in his critical essays, and his successors followed his simple and flexible style.

Prose

From the mass of forms in prose after 1660, three stand out with most significance for us: the prose allegory, the prose tale, and the essay.

The prose allegory is best exemplified by one of the world's most famous books, *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan (1628–1688). The great power of this allegory is due in part to its religious interest, but mainly to its simplicity, sincerity, and applicability. Under the familiar form of a jour-

ney is allegorized the way of life. Without strain and without extravagance are pictured the trials of a Christian on his way toward Heaven, with such power that Vanity Fair, the Slough of Despond, and other obstacles in the pilgrim's path are known even to those who have never actually read the book. Another prose allegory which has become a classic is *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift (1667-1745). The political allegory of *Gulliver's Travels* has long since evaporated and it has become a popular book for children who do not know that it is a bitter satire.

A third form of prose literature is the prose tale, best exemplified by the famous *Robinson Crusoe* of Daniel Defoe (c. 1659–1731). Defoe's stories, written in a style of absolute realism, were regarded not as fiction but as true accounts of the lives of adventurers. They have no real plot, but are in the line of the so-called "picaresque" tales. The "picaresque" tale originated in Spain with the famous *Lazarillo de Tormes*, a story of a beggar boy and the masters whom he served. The Spanish word "picaro," a rogue, gives the term "picaresque" to the many stories of vagabonds and adventurers which followed *Lazarillo de Tormes* in Spain, France, and England.

But of all prose forms after 1660 the most important is the essay.

Dryden developed the informal critical essay in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668). Defoe introduced the idea of publishing essays in periodical form in *A Review of the Affairs of France* (1704–1713). Richard Steele (1672–1729) and Joseph Addison (1672–1719) improved upon their predecessors in their periodicals *The Tatler* (1709–11) and *The Spectator* (1711–12 and 1714), especially in the well-known papers on Sir Roger de Coverley and his friends, and established the essay as a standard form in English literature. As it was developed in the eighteenth century the essay became

THE INTERIOR OF THE ROMAN THEATER AT ORANGE, FRANCE
(From a model in the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University)

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

A Medieval Tapestry

The spirit of the medieval romances is well illustrated in this fantastic treatment of a medieval hunting scene.

the prose counterpart of the lyric. It was the personal expression of a writer's ideas of life. Informality, ease, and individuality are the chief characteristics of the essay; grace, chárm, and urbanity are its ideals. The chief purpose of the essay is not to convey information or instruction but to give opportunity for the self-expression of the writer.

Drama

The drama flourished after 1660, but it could add nothing to the supreme work of the great Elizabethans. The search for novelty, however, added two forms to dramatic literature, the heroic play and the comedy of manners. The heroic play was a short-lived dramatic form. It was a tragedy written in rhyme, outrageously improbable in plot, presenting characters of preposterous emotions, picturing love as a raging and devastating passion, and presented with lavish stage setting. A well-known heroic play is Dryden's *Conquest of Granada.* The comedy of manners reflected the life of the witty, brilliant, superficial, and dissolute court of King Charles II and his successors. The comedy of manners is primarily intellectual comedy rising from the absurdity, shallowness, or hypocrisy of social life. Such plays are usually in prose, the conversation of the characters sparkling with epigram and wit. The greatest writer of the comedy of manners before 1740 is William Congreve (1670–1729) whose *The Way of the World* is a fascinating picture of "high society."

Poetry

Though poetry after 1660 lost the imaginative qualities which glorified it in earlier days, it continued to be widely written and widely read.

Only one poet, John Milton (1608–1674), continued the poetic traditions of the past. After a youth spent in study

and travel, writing with gentle seriousness his descriptive poems *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, his masque *Comus* and his early sonnets, he turned, in the prime of his life, to the service of the state under Oliver Cromwell. He vehemently defended the Puritan power with his pamphlets and worked diligently in what we should call the department of state of the Puritan government. When Charles II returned from exile in 1660, Milton retired from active life, old, worn, and blind. In his last years he wrote the greatest examples of the English epic.

Epic poetry had received much study ever since 1550 because of the high reputation of Virgil who was regarded as the greatest of ancient poets. It was natural for Milton when he made up his mind to crown his life with a poem which would demand all his powers to fix upon the grandest of all the ancient forms of poetry, the epic. His epic poems *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* take their place among the greatest literary achievements of the world. They stand beside the *Æneid* and the *Divine Comedy*. Written in Milton's old age, after a lifetime spent upon intellectual pursuits, they engaged his ripest powers. As the *Divine Comedy* is the epic of medieval Catholicism, Milton's great poems are the epic of the Protestantism of the Reformation. They were, even by an age hostile to Puritanism, recognized as a mighty achievement, and soon became established as the supreme expression of the epic in English literature.

An interesting offshoot of epic poetry was the mock-epic in which the so-called "epic machinery," the familiar epic expressions, the extended similes, the intervention of deities, the "catalogue," the invocations to the muses, and the epic battles were used for burlesque or satirical purposes. The best example of the mock-epic in English is Alexander Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. The poem is an elaborate satire on English society. Lords and ladies replace classic heroes, attendant

sylphs replace pagan divinities, a card game becomes an epic conflict, and a quarrel over a lock of hair causes a mighty struggle in society. Never was the heroic couplet used with more brilliance than in this, the most polished and subtle of Pope's works.

Descriptive poetry received its full development after 1660. In the eighteenth century every phase of city and country life received attention in more or less poetic descriptive verse. In general, nature in its varied phases was the subject. As time went on, the description of nature became more and more conventionalized with a standardized poetic diction which was not disturbed until Wordsworth in 1800 pointed the way to a simpler and more natural manner of expression.

Another poetical form which became even more widespread than descriptive poetry was didactic poetry of two kinds: satire and the versified essay.

Didactic poetry adopted as the vehicle best suited for satire and for expository purposes the heroic couplet, two iambic pentameter lines rhymed. This measure was admirable in its condensation, point, terseness, brilliance, and clearness. But it also was death to imaginative poetry. At its best it furnishes some of the most quotable lines in English poetry; at its worst it is monotonous and dreary.

John Dryden (1631–1700) took the heroic couplet in its experimental stage and by the vigor of his mind made it a powerful intellectual instrument. Alexander Pope (1688–1744) took Dryden's verse and, adding to it polish, brilliance, and nimble wit, became the greatest satirist and verse essayist in English literature. With Pope the heroic couplet flashed like a rapier:

> "Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
> To taste awhile the pleasures of a Court;
> In various talk th' instructive hours they past
> Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;

> One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
> And one describes a charming Indian screen;
> A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
> At ev'ry word a reputation dies."

To-day it is hard to realize that from 1660 to 1740 satire and versified essay in the heroic couplet held the field as the supreme achievement in poetry. To-day we look upon other forms as more interesting, but for an age when "reason" and "good sense" were deemed the highest intellectual achievement of civilization, didactic poetry which best exemplified these qualities was naturally the most popular poetic form.

The chief forms of literature developed from 1660 to 1740 may be summarized as follows:

I. Poetry
- a. Ode
  - Dryden: *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*
- b. Epic
  - Milton: *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*
- c. Mock-epic
  - Pope: *Rape of the Lock*
- d. Descriptive poetry
  - Pope: *Windsor Forest*
  - Thomson: *The Seasons*
- e. Didactic poetry
  1. Satire
     - Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel*
     - Pope: *The Dunciad*
  2. Versified essay
     - Dryden: *The Hind and the Panther*
     - Pope: *Essay on Criticism*

II. Prose
- a. Essay
  - Defoe: *A Review of the Affairs of France*
  - Addison and Steele: *The Spectator; The Tatler*

b. Miscellaneous prose
1. Criticism
Dryden: *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*
2. Prose allegory
Bunyan: *Pilgrim's Progress*
Swift: *Gulliver's Travels*
3. Prose tales
Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe*

III. Drama
a. Comedy of manners
Congreve: *The Way of the World*
b. Heroic play
Dryden: *The Conquest of Grenada*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM 1740–1798

The "age of prose and reason" held its own until the very end of the eighteenth century. After 1740 the writers of the age of Queen Anne one by one laid down their pens. Literature was continued in the spirit of their work, however, by a group of writers chief of whom was Samuel Johnson (1709–1784). Johnson gathered about him a famous group of men who represented the best in English intellectual life—such men as Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter; David Garrick, the actor; and Edmund Burke, the statesman.

Poetry

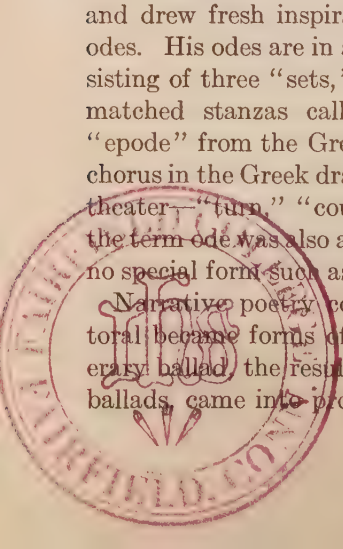
Didactic poetry together with satire continued to be written, especially by Samuel Johnson whose *London* and *Vanity of Human Wishes* were widely read. Descriptive poetry also held the field, though its themes were made more interesting by a new sympathy with the lives of common men. Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774) in *The Deserted Village* idealized with tender understanding life in an Irish village; and William Cowper (1731–1800) described in *The Task* the

familiar scenes of the English countryside. With a savage impatience at such sentimental writing, George Crabbe (1754–1832) in *The Village* stripped romance from pictures of rural life and established a new type of descriptive poetry which for stark honesty is unmatched in English literature.

Besides these survivals of the past there developed a new interest in lyrical poetry. Men began to feel the charm of the literature of the old days of Elizabeth and to stress emotional expression. William Blake (1757–1827) wrote his *Songs of Innocence* and his *Songs of Experience* with the verse of the Elizabethans singing in his heart; and Robert Burns (1759–1796) fitted immortal lyrics to old Scotch tunes. The sonnet, which had been neglected since Milton's time, reappeared as a kind of experiment, and such "elegiac poetry" as the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* by Thomas Gray (1716–1771) and the *Ode to Evening* by William Collins (1721–1759), half lyric and half descriptive poetry, won a permanent place for itself by its solemn and melancholy sweetness.

The ode also flourished anew with Thomas Gray (1716–1771) who abandoned the Cowleyan form of irregular ode and drew fresh inspiration from a direct study of classical odes. His odes are in a regular, almost mechanical form consisting of three "sets," each set consisting of three carefully matched stanzas called "strophe," "antistrophe," and "epode" from the Greek names applied to the march of the chorus in the Greek dramas about the great stage in the Greek theater—"turn," "counterturn," and "stand." After 1740 the term ode was also applied to poems on serious themes with no special form such as Collins's *Ode: How Sleep the Brave.*

Narrative poetry continued, but epic, allegory, and pastoral became forms of a bygone day. A new type, the literary ballad, the result of the rediscovery of the old popular ballads, came into prominence after the publication in 1765



of Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, a three volume collection of ballads and songs.

Prose

After 1740 the essay continued to maintain its hold with such periodical publications as Johnson's *The Rambler*. But prose as a vehicle for literary expression was outrunning the field of the essay. Johnson's best work is not in *The Rambler*, but in his critical essays on English writers, *The Lives of the Poets*. Edmund Burke's (1729–1797) famous *Speech for Conciliation with the Colonies* remains to-day among the few really great political orations of the world. Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* produced a masterpiece of historical writing which still stands almost unchallenged in its field. James Boswell (1740–1795) in his *Life of Johnson* produced a biography which is now as full of life and interest as it was when the memory of the great Dr. Johnson was fresh in the minds of his friends.

But of supreme importance in the prose literature of the period was the novel.

The novel, which was to become for the nineteenth century what the drama was for the sixteenth and seventeenth, was a new form, a native product of England, destined in a few generations to make its way into the literature of every land, and finally to become the leading form in modern literature. The modern novel, the imaginative presentation of character as it unfolds itself in a story, is impossible to define. It is not an epic because it has not the epic's stateliness of style, preoccupation with heroic events, and interest in a nation rather than in an individual; it is not a romance, because it has not the childish delight in marvels and exaggerated adventure of the old romances. It has more definite structure of plot than the old prose tale, more interest also

in the unfolding of character and the portrayal of setting. It has not the machinery of the epic. It is far more highly developed than the "character" or the essay. Yet it derives from all of these forms certain elements, fusing them, however, into a new, flexible, and absorbing form of creative literature.

The novel begins in 1740 with Samuel Richardson's (1689–1761) *Pamela.* Immediately the form became highly popular and by the early nineteenth century the following types of the novel had become pretty firmly established: (1) the novel of character analysis, first written in letters and later in connected narrative, confining itself to the presentation of the motives, ideals, thoughts, and feelings of a hero or heroine, *e. g.*, Richardson's *Clarissa;* (2) the novel which gives a cross-section of society and aims to present a complete picture of a large group of people in their relations to each other, *e. g.*, Henry Fielding's (1707–1754) *Tom Jones;* (3) the novel of adventure, carrying on the traditions of the prose tale and aiming to present a series of interesting events in the life of a single person without attempt at a coherent plot, *e.g.*, Tobias Smollett's (1721–1771) *Roderick Random;* (4) the novel of purpose, aiming at the criticism of some social custom or institution, *e. g.*, Godwin's (1756–1836) *Caleb Williams;* (5) the novel of manners, aiming to present the life of persons in Society, *e. g.*, Fanny Burney's (1752–1840) *Evelina;* (6) the historical novel, aiming to present a picture of social conditions in some historical period either by fictitious characters or fictitious events, *e. g.*, Horace Walpole's (1717–1797) *Castle of Otranto;* and (7) the fantastic novel which hooks upon a slender story the thoughts, dreams, or imaginative wanderings of the author, *e. g.*, Laurence Sterne's (1713–1768) *Tristram Shandy.* These seven types of the novel, all well developed by the first third of the nineteenth century, have with variations in material and in emphasis

upon plot, characters, and setting, dominated the immense development of prose fiction up to our own time.

Drama

After the early eighteenth century the drama steadily declined as a literary form. It was rapidly overshadowed by the novel. In the late eighteenth century David Garrick began a revival of Shakespeare's plays and with Oliver Goldsmith's (1728–1774) *She Stoops to Conquer* and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's (1751–1816) *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal,* comedy had a brief revival of brilliance. But the interest in drama as a literary form speedily declined again, and farces, melodrama, pantomimes, imitations of Shakespeare, and adaptations from the French satisfied theatergoers until the modern revival of drama after 1880.

SUMMARY

Forms in English Literature from 1740–1798

I. Poetry
  a. Lyrical poetry
    1. Song
      Blake, Burns
    2. Ode
      (a) Regular ode
        Gray
      (b) Informal ode
        Gray, Collins
  b. Narrative poetry
    1. Literary ballad
      Chatterton: *Bristowe Tragedy*
  c. Descriptive poetry
      Goldsmith: *The Deserted Village*
      Crabbe: *The Village*

II. Prose
  a. Essay
      Johnson, Goldsmith

b. Miscellaneous prose
   1. History
      Gibbon
   2. Biography
      Boswell
   3. Criticism
      Johnson

c. The novel
   1. The novel of character analysis
      Richardson: *Clarissa*
   2. The novel of large groups
      Fielding: *Tom Jones*
   3. The novel of adventure
      Smollett: *Roderick Random*
   4. The novel of purpose
      Godwin: *Caleb Williams*
   5. The novel of manners
      Burney: *Evelina*
   6. The historical novel
      Walpole: *Castle of Otranto*
   7. The fantastic novel
      Sterne: *The Sentimental Journey*

III. Drama

a. Comedy
   Goldsmith: *She Stoops to Conquer*
   Sheridan: *The School for Scandal*

b. Tragedy
   Johnson: *Irene*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM 1798–1832

In 1798, with the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* by William Wordsworth (1770–1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), begins definitely a new movement which historians of English literature have agreed to call the "romantic movement."

Poetry

The new period is marked by a break with the literary ideals which had ruled since 1660. For the adherence to tradition, the regularity, the limitations of literary subjects to those which were socially correct, the strict use of poetic diction, the permanence of the heroic couplet, and all the other literary conventions of the "age of prose and reason," the young writers of the romantic movement urged freedom, novelty, lack of restraint, free choice of material, and above all, complete freedom of the individual to write about life as he saw it without regard to social conventions. All about them the old life was breaking up. The American Revolution, the French Revolution, the change in social and industrial life,—these made life seem new, vigorous, exciting and free. As Wordsworth said:

> "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
> But to be young was very heaven!—Oh, times,
> In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
> Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
> The attraction of a country in romance!"

The new freedom to which, of course, such men as Thomson, Gray, Collins, Blake, and Burns in the eighteenth century had pointed the way, showed itself in the form and subject matter of literature. Wordsworth aimed at writing in "a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation"; Coleridge aimed to secure "a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to secure for" supernatural incidents "that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith." The new poetry wrote about life out of doors, flowers and trees, storms and mountains; about humble, simple people; about the hopes and aspirations of lovers of liberty; about the emotions and experiences of ardent, sensitive souls;

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about the joys of discovery felt by the lover of art and literature; about old stories drawn from legend, history, and simple religious faith; about the Greek and Roman classics seen in the light of a new day. These things and hundreds of others they felt intensely with a meaning that was new and deeply emotional. Life was illumined by

"The light that never was on sea or land;"

they heard a new voice, a voice

"The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

They explored with a new vision the literature of the past, and with memories of the great poets, could say with Keats:

"For I am brimful of the friendliness
That in a little cottage I have found;
Of fair-haired Milton's eloquent distress,
And all his love for gentle Lycid drowned;
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crowned."

In such an age one naturally expects the greatest variety of literary forms. Once more the sonnet came into its own, beginning with a popularity equaled only by its vogue in the time of Shakespeare. Wordsworth wrote sonnets almost as great in their dignity and power as those of Milton; and John Keats (1795–1821) gave the form an emotional depth and passion which it had never before known. The old themes of love were less cultivated now, and any deep feeling was a proper subject for treatment

"Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground."

A wide variety of miscellaneous lyrical poetry appears which can hardly be classified. Poets expressed themselves at will, as regard for definite form began to break down and

chief attention began to be paid to spontaneity and unconventionality. This miscellaneous lyrical poetry may be conveniently grouped under three heads: the simple lyric, the unrestrained, immediate expression of the poet's overflowing emotion; the lyric which presents not the emotion, but the scene or incident from which the emotion springs; and the reflective lyric, the result of "emotion recollected in tranquillity," containing thought rather than spontaneous emotion.

The simple lyric, or song, which in Shakespeare's time had sung itself so beautifully, and which in the eighteenth century had been neglected until the time of Blake and Burns, comes to its own in the work of Scott and Shelley with new subject matter and new music. In such songs as Scott's *Waken, lords and ladies gay* and *A weary lot is thine, fair maid,* there is the memory of old Scotch tunes; in such songs as Shelley's *Music, when soft voices die, To Night,* and *A Lament,* there is ethereal music, poignant feeling, tender grace, and intense emotion.

The lyric of incident is well illustrated by Scott's *Jock of Hazeldean* and Wordsworth's *Three Years She Grew.*

It is, however, in the reflective lyric that the new creative spirit of the romantic period found itself in fullest power. Wordsworth best describes this kind of writing:

> "I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity; the emotion is contemplated, till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind."

In this spirit the poets of the romantic period wrote lyrics which seem to us to-day works of imperishable beauty. In Wordsworth's *The Solitary Reaper* and *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud;* in Coleridge's *Frost at Midnight;* in Shelley's

Ode to the West Wind and *To a Skylark;* and in Landor's *Ah, What Avails the Sceptered Race* we feel that the poets

> "have learned
> To look on nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
> The still, sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh nor grating; though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue;"

that they have felt

> "a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man."

In such poems they set the standard of imaginative expression which, a century after their death, still seems valid.

The new movement in lyrical poetry affected the ode. The old formal pattern of the ode could not satisfy a time of experiment and freedom. In Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality* and Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* and *Ode on a Grecian Urn* we find the old power and dignity of the ode combined with new depth of emotion and flexibility of form. Elegiac poetry ceased to interest the poets of the romantic period. Shelley's *Adonais,* however, an elegy written on the death of Keats, showed that a poet of the time could write effectively in this form. In its form and variety, *Adonais* harks back to the elegiac poetry of the Greeks. It is thoroughly modern, however, in its unconventionality and in its vigor and intensity of feeling.

Narrative poetry flourished in bewildering variety. Every poet had a story to tell, and every poet put into the telling his own view of life. In the hills and valleys of his beloved Lake Country, Wordsworth watched the simple lives of the

country folk with a feeling that their joys and sorrows were deeper and more significant than those of city dwellers. With tender pathos he writes the tale of *Michael*, the shepherd whose life was bound up with that of his erring son, and who, heartbroken at his son's disgrace, would go to the barren hillside

> "to build the fold of which
> His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
> The pity which was then in every heart
> For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
> That many and many a day he thither went,
> And never lifted up a single stone."

In different style are Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*, full of weird mystery and eerie romance; Scott's *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, which recite in swinging measure, as if to martial music, old tales of daring adventure; Byron's *Mazeppa* and *The Bride of Abydos*, which captured the imagination of all Europe with their reflection of the passionate glamor of the Orient; Shelley's *Alastor*, in which a vague story embodies Shelley's dreams of ideal beauty; and Keats's *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*, a tender and pathetic love story.

The vogue of the literary ballad, begun in the preceding century by Percy's *Reliques*, continues in the work of Scott who knew, as did no other man of his time, the minstrelsy of the Scottish border.

Descriptive poetry in the formal manner of the eighteenth century lingered into the new period, but the poets of the new age were no longer interested in the artificiality of the old form. Their descriptive poems are not decorous, neat, sentimental, or realistic; they are passionate, strange, and glowing descriptions of the wilder aspects of nature either in foreign lands or in the poets'

> "land of heart's desire."

Only Wordsworth writes of the English countryside; in such poems as *Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey* and *Resolution and Independence*, familiar English scenes take on new meaning and beauty. Coleridge in *Kubla Khan* has a radiant vision of dreamland; Byron in *Childe Harold* pictures in glowing words the sea, the mountains, and Rome with its memories of a mighty past; and Keats in *The Eve of St. Agnes* creates a tapestry of sensuous beauty rich with

> "argent revelry,
> With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
> Numerous as shadows haunting fairily
> The brain, new stuffed, in youth, with triumphs gay
> Of old romance."

Indeed, the descriptive poetry of the romantic period is perhaps its most characteristic product. Here is its unmistakable voice, clear with the accent of youthful love, wonder, idealism, and a calm assurance that

> "A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
> Its loveliness increases; it will never
> Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
> A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
> Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing."

Didactic poetry still continues to be written, but in a form quite changed from that of the previous period. Only Byron in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* continues the tradition of personal satire in the heroic couplet. In *Don Juan*, however, a long narrative poem largely in *ottava rima*, he developed a new form of satire. On the slender thread of story he hangs his satirical reflections on the whole course of life. He takes nothing seriously, least of all himself. Passages of tender sentiment are interrupted by mocking laughter; passages of tragedy lose themselves in burlesque. The poem is a mine of beautiful poetry inter-

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Tomb of Chaucer, London

AN ENGLISH MYSTERY PLAY

The play of *Noah's Ark* as given by the Shipwrights' Guild in a city square in England four centuries ago. The details are those of a performance given at the New Theater, New York, in 1911.
(From a model in the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University)

spersed with doggerel; above all, it is a revelation of romantic irony, the self-satire of an intensely sensitive poet to whom, in the end, all life seemed vain and empty.

The most important type of didactic poetry in the romantic period one may call the "reflective epic." It is best illustrated by Wordsworth's poems *The Prelude* and *The Excursion* which he considered, in spite of their length, only parts of one great whole. Just as a great story may have epic size, dignity, and grandeur, so he seems to have thought of his reflective poems. They were the presentation of the thoughts of a man who had carefully developed for himself, after a youth of storm and stress, a consistent philosophy of life which he made articulate in serious dignified verse. The "reflective epic" of Wordsworth has interest for us accordingly as we believe his thoughts to have value and his poetry to have power.

Prose

Though the romantic period is richest in its poetry, prose also felt the new literary influences. Just as lyrical poetry felt the widening influence of the new spirit of individualism, so the essay began to be diversified both in form and subject. In the *Essays of Elia* Charles Lamb (1775–1834) made the essay almost as flexible in the presentation of moods as the lyric. The tender pathos of *Dream Children*, the gentle reminiscence of *Old China*, the farcical abandon of *A Dissertation on Roast Pig*, and the burlesque seriousness of *A Chapter on Ears*—these and many other sides of one of the sweetest personalities in English literature make the *Essays of Elia* the highest achievement of the personal essay in English.

With the rise of modern magazines after 1800, prose literature extended to wider and wider fields. History declined in interest, but literary criticism with William Hazlitt (1778–1830), and biography with Thomas De Quincey's

(1785–1859) fantastic autobiography, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, and Robert Southey's (1774–1843) *Life of Nelson* more than hold their own.

In the novel of the period only two writers need consideration here, Jane Austen (1775–1817) and Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832). Jane Austen was a quiet, unobtrusive woman who lived in quiet little English towns. One would have supposed that there was little in her life to provide material for great novels, but she was a person to whom all life was full of interest. In *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility* she wrote novels of life in English country houses and provincial towns so true in their interpretation of human nature, so delightful in humor, and so admirable in structure and style that they are of perennial interest.

The novels of Scott are in quite a different strain. His aim was to tell vivid stories of chivalry, daring, and military prowess against a background of history. In general, his novels fall into three groups: the novels of Scottish history, such as *Old Mortality* and *Guy Mannering;* the novels of English history, such as *Ivanhoe* and *Kenilworth;* and the novels of Continental history, such as *The Talisman* and *Quentin Durward.* His historical background generally follows the facts and enlivens our historical knowledge with richly detailed pictures of famous men and famous places. Against this background are placed the fictitious lives of Scotch or English men and women of noble birth.

So popular did Scott's novels become, and so widely imitated were they in other countries, that Scott may fairly be said to have established the historical novel as an important form of literature.

Drama

There is little to say of the drama in this period. Shelley in *Prometheus Unbound* and Byron in *Cain* expressed them-

selves in what we call "lyrical drama," that is, poems in dramatic form which express the ideas, moods, emotions, and reflections of the author rather than tell a story through the speech of characters for presentation on a stage before an audience. Only one real tragedy that is truly dramatic and at the same time of literary value was written, Shelley's *The Cenci*, a dark and terrible story of cruelty and crime in the Italian Renaissance.

SUMMARY 1798–1832

I. Poetry
  a. Lyrical poetry
    1. Sonnet
      Wordsworth, Keats
    2. Song
      Scott, Shelley
    3. Reflective lyric
      Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Landor
    4. Ode
      Wordsworth, Keats
    5. Elegy
      Shelley
  b. Narrative poetry
    1. Tale
      Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, Keats
    2. Literary ballad
      Scott
  c. Descriptive poetry
      Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats
  d. Didactic poetry
    1. Satire
      Byron
    2. Reflective epic
      Wordsworth

II. Prose
  a. Essay
      Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey

b. Criticism
Wordsworth, Coleridge, Hazlitt
c. Biography
De Quincey, Southey

III. Novel
a. Novel of manners
Jane Austen
b. Historical novel
Scott

IV. Drama
a. Lyrical drama
Shelley, Byron
b. Tragedy
Shelley

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM 1832 TO 1880

By 1832 the great writers of the romantic period either were dead or were no longer doing important work. A new generation was rising which was to continue the literary traditions of the romantic period, but which was to be interested in new ideas and new ways of life.

The year 1832 saw the passage of the great Reform Bill which was the first step in the progress of England toward its modern democratic government. Within comparatively few years more changes were to come in English life than had come since the Renaissance. The modern factory system with its many social and economic problems; the inprovement in means of travel, such as the steamship and the railway; improved methods of communication, such as the telegraph and the modern postal system; the vast increase in wealth; the exploration of the dark places in the world and the settlement of many of them by Europeans; the growth of new states, such as Germany, Italy, and

Japan; the rise of the United States to world power; the preparation for war on a tremendous scale; and the spread of education—all these and a score of other forces were about to make a profound change in men's views of life. In a few short years still another great literary period, usually called—from the fact that it coincided with the long reign of Queen Victoria—the "Victorian period," was under way.

Poetry

The greatest development continued to be in the field of poetry. Here as elsewhere in Victorian literature the development was in subject matter rather than in form. The sonnet, for instance, could be written no more perfectly than it had been written by Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, and Keats, but it could be used to express a wider range of subjects. Almost all the poets of the new day wrote some sonnets, though the best known are by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861) whose *Sonnets from the Portuguese* revived the love sonnet with a new sincerity and depth; and by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882) whose *House of Life*, inspired directly by the Italian sonnets of the Renaissance, contains some of the most glowing love poetry in English literature.

The song, too, appears with continued power in the work of Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892) whose poems, by their sweetness, grace, and music, made him the most popular and most honored poet of the nineteenth century. His songs in *The Princess:* "Tears, idle tears," "Sweet and low," and "The splendor falls on castle walls," not only were great lyrics, but achieved a popularity which truly great lyrics have never since achieved. The songs of Robert Browning (1812–1889) waited longer for recognition, but

in time were valued at their true worth. "The year's at the spring" from *Pippa Passes*, and *Cavalier Tunes* have not only grace and charm, but a fire and energy of which Tennyson was not capable.

As poets demanded more and more freedom than could be secured in rigidly restricted patterns, the ode continued to be treated more and more freely. Indeed the name itself became less popular. Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* with its martial rhythms and its dignified thought and form is in the best traditions of the free ode.

Elegiac poetry is well represented in the works of Tennyson and of Matthew Arnold (1822–1888). A large part of Tennyson's fame rested on his great elegy *In Memoriam*, written in memory of his friend Arthur Henry Hallam. This elegy, which is a collection of lyrics on varied thoughts about life and death, is one of the really great English elegies. To the readers of the nineteenth century its author seemed a great teacher expressing in plaintive, courageous, mournful, and triumphant verse their religious hopes, fears, doubt, and faith.

Matthew Arnold's elegy *Thyrsis* was written in memory of his friend, the poet Arthur Hugh Clough. It is noble, serious, and well sustained as are most of Arnold's poems, presenting with grave nobility his questionings of the religious beliefs of his time.

The reflective lyric, as in the romantic period, is by far the most important form of lyrical poetry. Here again Tennyson, Browning, and Arnold are the great masters.

Tennyson's mind was deeply stirred by the many changes which he saw in the course of his long life. He attempted to carry on the noblest traditions of poetry, to keep abreast of the new interests of science and democracy, and to retain a calmly assured faith

"that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill."

Possessed as he was with a sure command of technical form, it is little wonder that such poems as *Ulysses*, *Tithonus*, and *Crossing the Bar* seem likely never to lose their calm and glowing beauty.

Browning was a man of quite different stamp. At the end of his life he wrote of himself:

"One who never turned his back but marched
breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong
would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake."

In this spirit of triumphant optimism, though in verse which was often obscure and harsh, he set out to express his reflections on the great problems of life which all men must face. In *Rabbi Ben Ezra* he expresses his conviction that

"Our times are in His hand
Who saith, 'A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God:
see all, nor be afraid!'"

In *Prospice* he expressed his faith in immortality; in *Love Among the Ruins* he sings the overwhelming importance of true love; and in *The Statue and the Bust* he affirms:

"the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
Is—the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,
Though the end in sight was a vice, I say."

Matthew Arnold is the poet of religious doubt and of moral strength. In *Dover Beach* he feels that religious faith

is ebbing, but in *Morality* and *Self Dependence* he affirms his belief that the only road to happiness when religious belief falters is a renewed emphasis upon moral truth.

Narrative poetry in the Victorian period is as rich and varied as lyrical poetry. The two most interesting types are the idyll, which Tennyson made his own, and the dramatic monologue, which Browning wrote in vivid and novel form.

The idylls of Tennyson are modern adaptations of material from the old romances, especially from the version of the Arthurian legends made by Sir Thomas Malory (c.1430–c. 1470) in the *Morte D'Arthur*. Written in blank verse and filled with richly descriptive lines, the *Idylls of the King* roused a new interest in the literature of the middle ages.

The dramatic monologue was practically an invention of Robert Browning. In this form a character tells his thoughts or experiences at a moment of crisis. The interest of lyric, drama, and narrative are united in this form which became rapidly popular as interest grew in the analysis of men's motives and ideals. Typical monologues are *My Last Duchess* in which an Italian nobleman tells the story of his late wife, revealing as he tells it his own wretched soul; and *Fra Lippo Lippi* in which an Italian painter tells the story of his life and indirectly presents a philosophy of art. A collection of dramatic monologues makes up Browning's greatest work *The Ring and the Book* in which the characters concerned in an old Italian murder trial give each his version of the story. Browning's most powerful, passionate, and vivid poetry is in this form.

The regular verse tale was also cultivated. Tennyson's *Enoch Arden* tells the story of a shipwrecked sailor who returns home to find himself supposed dead. Browning's *Hervé Riel* tells the daring exploit of an obscure French sailor who saved the French fleet; and Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum* in measured and dignified verse tells the old tale

of the Persian warrior who killed, unknowingly, his own son.

The influence of the popular ballad, so strong in the work of Coleridge and Scott, diminishes in the Victorian period. This form was too simple for the demands of modern poets who saw life as a far too intricate thing to be expressed in ballad measures. One interesting example of the influence of the ballad, however, is Tennyson's *The Revenge: A Ballad of the Fleet* which tells in stirring stanzas a tale of the Spanish Armada.

A form new to English literature is the versified novel, the best example of which is Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh*. For a time this form was highly popular, but its vogue speedily waned.

Prose

The varied life of Victorian England and the innumerable avenues of knowledge which suddenly appeared immensely widened the field of prose literature.

The essay ceased to have its chief development in the presentation of the author's moods and emotions, and became primarily the vehicle for the expression of his ideas on every subject. The greatest essayists of the period are Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800–1859), and Matthew Arnold (1822–1888).

Carlyle brought to the essay a powerful and penetrating mind, a passion for righteousness and a style which was sometimes merely harsh and tortuous, and sometimes vigorous and picturesque. His *Essay on Burns* is perhaps the best known of his numerous essays. Macaulay was clear, sharp, specific, and definite in style. His mind was a rich storehouse of facts drawn from every corner of the world's history and literature. His *Life of Samuel Johnson* is best known to students in schools and is an excellent example of

his literary power. Arnold has none of the popular qualities of either Carlyle or Macaulay. His style is much more subtle, his subjects much less known, and his ideas much less easily grasped. His *Study of Poetry* shows him in his most pleasant mood.

Important as the essay is, however, it is overshadowed by an immense variety of miscellaneous prose by these and many other writers. Carlyle's *French Revolution* and Macaulay's *History of England* are great histories in the comprehensive and picturesque manner which contemporary scientific historians seldom care to cultivate. Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* presents Carlyle's philosophy, stressing what Theodore Roosevelt in a later time called "the strenuous life." Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* is an affirmation of the value of culture in a world which seemed to Arnold about to be overwhelmed in its search for wealth and power. John Henry Newman's (1801–1890) *Idea of a University* is a series of lectures on education developing many ideas which advocates of liberal education still believe valid. John Ruskin's (1819–1900) *Modern Painters* is a masterly study of the nature and function of art. Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–1895) wrote various essays on scientific subjects, popularizing the epoch-making discoveries and theories of the great naturalist Charles Darwin.

Novel

The novel, the newest of the great forms of English literature, comes to its fullest development in the Victorian period. In general it follows the paths laid down in the eighteenth century.

One of the greatest novelists of the period was Charles Dickens (1812–1870) whose novels of English life, especially among the poor, made him one of the best known and best

loved writers of the time. His humor, his genius for discovering grotesque figures, his love of vivid incident, and his passionate hatred of social injustice are found in all his works. He wrote novels based upon history, such as *A Tale of Two Cities*; novels of adventure in a setting of his own time, such as *Great Expectations*; and novels describing large groups of people in varied stations in life, such as *David Copperfield.* He was happiest in writing novels whose purpose was to throw a vivid light upon social abuses. In *Oliver Twist* he exposed the evils of poorhouses; in *Nicholas Nickleby* he called upon the public conscience to put an end to the evils of a certain type of school in England; and in *Hard Times* he described the sufferings of exploited factory hands.

Thackeray, on the other hand, was interested chiefly in satirizing the shams and pretense of English society among the wealthier classes. In *Vanity Fair* and *The Newcomes,* for instance, he shows how people make themselves miserable in a circle of worldly, vain, and pleasure seeking companions. He also tried his hand at historical novels in *Henry Esmond* and *The Virginians,* showing in these, too, his satirical bent.

Lesser novelists are Frederick Marryatt (1792–1848) whose *Mr. Midshipman Easy* is still an interesting tale of the sea; Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855) whose *Jane Eyre* is a story of a poor governess in romantic surroundings; Charles Kingsley (1819–1875) who wrote in *Westward Ho!* a story of adventure in the days of Queen Elizabeth and in *Alton Locke* a bitter exposure of the London sweatshops; and Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873) whose *Last Days of Pompeii* carried the historical novel into new fields.

Two aspects of the novel receive special emphasis in the Victorian novel. The analysis of character with careful attention to the motives which cause men and women to act as they do particularly interested George Eliot (1819-1880).

This emphasis in *Adam Bede, Romola,* and *Middlemarch* caused critics to call her books "psychological novels," a term which at a later time became rather overworked. In Benjamin Disraeli's (1804-1881) *Coningsby* and in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* there is special emphasis upon setting, the background out of which the story grows. In these novels the interest lies not so much in the plot or characters as in the atmosphere of savage gloom—in *Wuthering Heights*—or in the men and women who made up a social set from which Disraeli was trying to create a new party in English politics.

SUMMARY 1832–1880

I. Poetry
  a. Lyrical poetry
    1. Sonnet
      Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Dante Gabriel Rossetti
    2. Song
      Tennyson, Browning
    3. Ode
      Tennyson
    4. Elegy
      Tennyson
      Arnold
    5. Versified novel
      Elizabeth Barrett Browning

II. Prose
  a. Essay
    Carlyle, Macaulay, Arnold
  b. History
    Carlyle, Macaulay
  c. Science
    Huxley
  d. Education
    Newman
  e. Criticism
    Arnold, Ruskin

III. The novel
  a. The novel of character analysis
     Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot
  b. The novel of large groups
     Thackeray, Dickens
  c. The novel of adventure
     Marryatt, Dickens
  d. The novel of purpose
     Dickens
  e. The novel of manners
     Thackeray, Dickens
  f. The historical novel
     Dickens, Thackeray, Kingsley, George Eliot, Bulwer-Lytton
  g. The novel of setting
     Disraeli, Emily Brontë

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM 1880–1914

About 1880 a period of great literary activity came to an end. For a hundred years great writers of prose and poetry had been widening and deepening the channels of English literature enriching particularly lyrical poetry and the essay and making the novel the chief modern vehicle for imaginative expression. With the new generation, however, came a period of unrest, criticism, and experiment in literature. Old traditional literary influences lost their power, and young men and women turned for intellectual stimulus toward the physical and social sciences and toward business which was just beginning its immense modern expansion.

Under such circumstances it was natural that literary forms after 1880 should have been few and should have been meagerly cultivated.

Poetry

Interest in poetry after 1880 declines almost to the vanishing point. Lyrical poetry in the traditional forms had little

vogue. In the nineties a brief interest in old French forms, ballade, rondeau, and triolet, flared into momentary popularity. For a time the varied and daring experiments of Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837–1909) with every type of lyrical poetry and with every form of metrical pattern captured the imaginations of young men and women. Rudyard Kipling continued the literary ballad and Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) wrote his delightful *Child's Garden of Verses.*

After the beginning of the twentieth century three poets, John Masefield, W. W. Gibson, and Alfred Noyes wrote poems which indicated a rebirth of poetic interest. Masefield's lyrics of the sea gave promise of new vigor and his verse tales *The Everlasting Mercy* and *The Widow in the Bye Street* pointed the way to the revival of the form with some of the freedom and directness of the Chaucerian tale. Gibson explored new material in the lives of English workingmen and country laborers in *Daily Bread* and *Fires* and Noyes, working in the tradition of Keats and Tennyson, discovered new sources of romance in *The Flower of Old Japan* and *The Forest of Wild Thyme.*

Prose

Essay and miscellaneous prose continued the wide activity which they had acquired during the nineteenth century. A wider interest in style characterized all writing in prose, so that the line between literature and mere presentation of facts became more and more hazy. Renewed interest in the essay came from Walter Pater (1839–1894) and from Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894). Pater's fastidiousness, taste, and nice appreciation of the beauty of prose made writers more acutely conscious of the element of style in prose. In *Marius the Epicurean* he portrayed with calm

and dignified beauty the thoughts of a young man in the days of the declining Roman Empire; in *The Renaissance* he analyzed the charm of the Italian masters of art at the height of their power. Stevenson's buoyancy, optimism, and eager interest in life humanized and broadened the scope of subject matter of the essay. The matured sweetness of *Virginibus Puerisque,* the gayety of *Travels with a Donkey,* and the ardor and validity of *Familiar Studies of Men and Books* made these volumes classics almost as soon as they were written.

The more journalistic style of post-victorian prose appears in the writing of G. K. Chesterton who, in such books as *Orthodoxy* and *Heretics* tilted valiantly with brilliant epigram and paradox at the windmills of popular opinion.

The novel

With the death of the great Victorian novelists Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot, the novel underwent a change. Under the influence of French writers a new movement, "realism," entered prose fiction. The realists urged a more accurate record of actual life than the older novelists had given; they urged that less attention be paid to sentiment, to happy endings, to beautiful setting. They urged that the ugly facts of life be faced more fearlessly and that analysis of character be given more importance than presentation of incident. Novels became shorter and more highly condensed. The author spent less time on descriptions of setting and on stating his own ideas.

Soon the novels began to assume new groupings: (1) the realistic novel, which tried honestly and faithfully to depict commonplace everyday life; (2) the romantic novel, which, in violent revolt from realism, tried to recapture a world of adventure, dreams, and chivalry; (3) the novel

of character analysis, which aimed at a minute and penetrating analysis of subtle motives and characteristics; (4) the novel of purpose, which, like the earlier novel of purpose, made problems its chief interest; and (5) the historical novel, which was influenced by the four preceding types.

The most important of the older novelists of the period were Thomas Hardy and George Meredith (1828–1909).

Hardy's point of view was frankly pessimistic. He adopted the technique of the realists; first, to present faithful pictures of peasant life in southwestern England, as in *The Woodlanders* and *Far from the Madding Crowd;* and second, to develop his thesis of the insignificance of human suffering in the face of an unconcerned Destiny and an unmoved Nature, as in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *The Return of the Native.*

Meredith, on the other hand, though he faced the facts of life, believed in the power of individuals to shape their own destiny. To his faith in individual effort, he added an intense interest in psychological analysis, both of which placed his *The Egoist* and *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* among the most interesting and powerful modern novels.

Among the younger novelists the most representative was Arnold Bennett. He followed the theories of the new realism to the end and produced in *The Old Wives' Tale* a novel which succeeds by a multitude of seemingly unimportant facts in making its story intensely real and intensely vital.

But the realists were not to have the novel entirely at their mercy. Robert Louis Stevenson revolted violently from their theories, and with *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped* started a trend toward romantic tales which made an instant appeal to lovers of excitement and adventure. Following in his footsteps, but using the resources developed by the

Courtesy of Famous Players-Lasky Corp.

"Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
To taste awhile the pleasures of a Court."

"Portrait of Mrs. Carnac," by Sir Joshua Reynolds
An example of the work of Samuel Johnson's great contemporary and friend.

realists, Joseph Conrad in *Lord Jim* and *Victory* tapped the vein of romance which Englishmen have always connected with the sea.

With the growing interest in social problems which reached its highest point with the coming of the twentieth century, began a renewed development of the novel of social analysis not with the humor and satire of Dickens, but with the searching intensity of the realists. In *The Man of Property* John Galsworthy laid bare the materialism of the moneyed classes; in *The Country House* he probed the minds of the aristocracy; in *Fraternity* he showed the futility of the sentimental workers for social reform; and in *The Patrician* he pictured the English nobility imprisoned in their caste. H. G. Wells represents the effect of the new social sciences upon a man of scientific training. The muddle of English social, political, and economic life furnished the material for such novels as *Tono Bungay* and *The New Macchiavelli,* novels for which some day the student of social history will be grateful.

A new form of prose fiction was the short story. Short stories in rudimentary form have always existed, but it was only after 1880 that the short story was regarded consciously and critically. Professor Brander Matthews in 1885 used these words to characterize the short story: "A true short-story differs from the novel chiefly in its essential unity of impression. . . . A short-story deals with a single character, a single event, a single emotion, or the series of emotions called forth by a single situation. . . . Thus the short-story has, what the novel cannot have, the effect of 'totality,' as Poe called it, the unity of impression."

The short story became immensely popular, partly because the rapid multiplication of weekly and monthly magazines created a steady and ever-increasing demand

for it. Rudyard Kipling became the leading writer of short stories in English. His inexhaustible stock of fresh and interesting material, his romantic vigor, and his picturesque diction made him particularly fitted for short story writing.

Drama

After 1880 came a rebirth of interest in the drama. Dramatic literature had had merely a sporadic life since the middle of the eighteenth century. But now, under the influence of Continental playwrights, particularly of the Norwegian, Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906), English dramatic literature came once more to a new and vigorous life. But the old forms were gone. Tragedy and comedy no longer had their old meanings. The conventional division into five acts was disregarded. The soliloquy, the aside, and the set scenes with long speeches disappeared. With them disappeared the conventional types of character and the conventional beginning and ending. The new drama was affected by the same realism which produced the new novel. It insisted upon a drama which should give an accurate picture of life in lifelike dialogue with a setting accurately reproducing the actual background of modern life.

In the new drama tragedy and comedy ceased to have their old meanings. A classification of drama into comedy and tragedy became impossible since playwrights were interested, not in types but in themes. There are plays dealing with problems of social organization like John Galsworthy's *Justice;* plays dealing with problems raised by social conventions like Arthur Wing Pinero's *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray;* plays of the analysis of character like James Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows* or George Bernard Shaw's *Candida;* fantasies like Barrie's *Peter Pan;* and many

others. Real classification is impossible, since the new drama was frankly experimental. Definitions lost their validity; playwrights were interested in expressing their ideas of life or in holding the attention of the audience with an absorbing story, not in following exacting rules laid down by traditional criticism.

SUMMARY 1880–1914

I. Poetry
  a. Lyrical poetry
    Swinburne
  b. Narrative poetry
    Kipling, Masefield, Noyes, Gibson

II. Prose
  Essay
    Pater, Stevenson, Chesterton

III. Fiction
  a. The novel
    1. Realistic portrayal of common life
      Hardy, Bennett
    2. Romantic novel
      Stevenson, Conrad
    3. Novel of character analysis
      Meredith
    4. Novel of social analysis
      Galsworthy, Wells
  b. The short story
    Kipling, Stevenson

IV. The drama
  a. Plays of social criticism
    Galsworthy, Shaw
  b. Plays dealing with problems of social conventions
    Pinero
  c. Plays of character analysis
    Barrie
  d. Fantasies
    Barrie

THE FORMS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AT THE PRESENT TIME

It is clear that the forms of English literature have developed, grown, decayed, and vanished with the passage of years. The epic, the romance, the allegory, the pastoral, the elegy, the various types of Elizabethan drama, even the types of such a recently developed form as the novel have had their vogue and have passed away probably never to return. The nineteenth century seemed to have accelerated this natural development until, in our own day, there seems no possible classification of literary forms except the broadest ones. The novel and the short story remain, though almost every new novel is a form unto itself; the drama remains, though the influence of the motion-picture causes constant innovations in form; the essay remains, though it exists rather because of the interest and novelty of its material than because of its form. Of the types of lyrical poetry only the sonnet remains unchanged, and that is less and less cultivated. The very form of verse has undergone a revolution in the so-called "new poetry" which, after 1914, became the most interesting and startling development in English literature since the revival of drama about 1880.

The "new poetry" is frankly revolutionary. It scorns tradition, believing that adherence to tradition dulls the writer's sense of poetic truth. It despises conventionality. It wants to be fresh, spontaneous, individual, sincere.

The admirers of the "new poetry" claim for it the following characteristics:

1. The new poetry is free from poetic diction. The conventional and traditional language of poetry is discarded for natural speech of ordinary men. Moreover in the new poetry all language is regarded as fit for the uses of poetry. No distinction is made between "low" or "common" speech and "poetic" speech. The following lines from Carl

Sandburg's *Blue Island Intersection* illustrate this characteristic:

"Six street ends come together here.
They feed people and wagons into the center.
In and out all day horses with thoughts of nose-bags,
Men with shovels, women with baskets and baby buggies.
Six ends of streets and no sleep for them all day.
The people and wagons come and go, out and in.
Triangles of banks and drug stores watch.
The policemen whistle, the trolley cars bump:
Wheels, wheels, feet, feet, all day." [1]

2. The "new poetry" is national and local in its spirit. It does not try to follow the great European traditions. It is interested in the commonplace and the familiar. Admirers of the new poetry are fond of characterizing it by such words as "stark," "unflinching," "indigenous," and "pitiless." For illustrations turn to any anthology of contemporary American verse; for instance, Louis Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry* or Monroe and Henderson's *The New Poetry*. There, under the names of Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, Vachel Lindsay, Ezra Pound, John Gould Fletcher, Amy Lowell, and Edwin Arlington Robinson you will find the spirit of America, both national and local, expressed in verse-idioms quite different from those of classic European tradition.

3. The "new poetry" discards the conventional rhythmical patterns of traditional poetry. For the regular rhythms of the past it substitutes the irregular rhythms of common speech. It insists that "all poetry is the reproduction of the tones of actual speech." It speaks of "vers libre" or "free line verse," of "cadences," of "organic rhythm," rather than of "iambics," "pentameters," or "rhyme schemes." Amy Lowell's *Madonna of the Evening Flowers* is a striking example of these unconventional rhythms:

[1] Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company.

"All day long I have been working,
Now I am tired.
I call: 'Where are you?'
But there is only the oak tree rustling in the wind.
The house is very quiet,
The sun shines in on your books,
On your scissors and thimble just put down,
But you are not there.
Suddenly I am lonely:
Where are you?
I go about searching.

Then I see you,
Standing under a spire of pale blue larkspur,
With a basket of roses on your arm.
You are cool, like silver,
And you smile.
I think the Canterbury bells are playing little tunes,
You tell me that the peonies need spraying,
That the columbines have overrun all bounds,
That the pyrus japonica should be cut back and rounded.
You tell me these things.
But I look at you, heart of silver,
White heart-flame of polished silver,
Burning beneath the blue steeples of the larkspur,
And I long to kneel instantly at your feet,
While all about us peal the loud, sweet *Te Deums* of
the Canterbury Bells." [1]

4. The "new poetry" is hard and clear, definite and concrete, free from vagueness and moralizing, from artificiality and sentimentality of emotion and expression. These qualities are illustrated in the following description from Robert Frost's *Birches:*

"Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves

[1] Reprinted by permission of and by arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun." [1]

This freedom from sentimentality can be seen in Edwin Arlington Robinson's *Richard Cory:*

"Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
'Good morning,' and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head." [2]

Even these definite claims, however, do not define a type of lyrical poetry; they merely characterize certain contem-

[1] Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company.
[2] Reprinted by permission of the author and of Charles Scribner's Sons.

porary poems. What is true of all other forms of English literature is true also of poetry: it has lost the old restraints of form, it is free and experimental. Every writer creates his own type.

The future of the forms of English literature no one can predict. For a long time the present flexibility and freedom will probably continue. Then may come a day when writers will say with Wordsworth:

> "Me this uncharter'd freedom tires;
> I feel the weight of chance-desires;"

and may once more choose to work out their ideas within the limits of traditional art.

CHAPTER III

POETRY

WHY PEOPLE READ POETRY

Why do people read poetry? In the first place, poetry gives us the pleasure of recognition. That is, in a way, a proof that it is widely read. We all flush with involuntary pleasure when we hear an allusion to Joyce Kilmer's *Trees* or to Alan Seeger's *I Have a Rendezvous with Death*, because we know about them.

Poetry affords opportunity for pleasurable recognition

But the feeling of pleasurable recognition is only a minor reason for our enjoyment of poetry. When we read in a novel that the heroine, as she looked out into the moonlit winter night, quoted softly to herself:

Poetry gives pleasure by appealing to the imagination

> "Deep on the convent-roof the snows
> Are sparkling to the moon;
> My breath to heaven like vapor goes;
> May my soul follow soon!"

it does give us pleasure if we recognize the poem; but it gives us pleasure even if we do not. The reason is not far to seek. It is because poetry stimulates the imagination. It enables us to see in our imagination the beauty of the snow "sparkling to the moon" and to feel the cold stillness of the winter night. It recreates for us the beauty of "October's bright blue weather"

> "When on the ground red apples lie
> In piles like jewels shining,
> And redder still on old stone walls
> Are leaves of woodbine twining."

In the dead of winter *The Vision of Sir Launfal* carries us back to June when

> "The cowslip startles in meadows green,"

and

> "The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice."

There is no wonderland to which poetry cannot take us through the imagination, whether it be deep under the sea in

> "Sandstrewn caverns, cool and deep,
> Where the winds are all asleep,
> Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
> Where the salt weed sways in the stream"

or in that ideal land of

> ". . . magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

Poetry takes us back into the Middle Ages with Keats in *The Eve of St. Agnes* or leaves us

> "Alone, alone, all, all, alone,
> Alone on a wide, wide sea"

with the Ancient Mariner. It transports us to a snowbound New England homestead,

> "Content to let the north wind roar
> In baffled rage at pane and door"

with Whittier, or brings us once more to the time when

> "A boy's will is the wind's will
> And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Small wonder, then, that poetry is universally read. Through its appeal to the imagination it offers us the surest escape from the stern reality of facts.

Poetry also gives us pleasure by expressing what we cannot ourselves express. There is scarcely a feeling of which man is capable that does not find expression in some great poem. Thus the poet recreates for us not only a picture or a sensation or an experience, but also the feeling that goes with it. His power of expressing in words these things gives keen pleasure.

Poetry gives pleasure by expressing what we cannot ourselves express

Finally, poetry gives pleasure by helping us to understand and sympathize. The poet is keenly sensitive not only to the claims of beauty, but also to the claims of human sympathies. Through sympathy he has gained understanding. Through his love of the beautiful he is able to express beautifully this understanding.

Poetry helps us to understand life

Because poetry appeals to our imagination and to our sense of beauty, because it expresses what we feel and cannot ourselves express, and because it helps us to understand and sympathize with life, it makes our lives richer. If you wish to test this statement, read again any great poem with which you have been familiar since childhood, noticing how much unconscious pleasure, appreciation, and understanding have been added to your life because of it. Any simple lyric like *Sweet and Low* or *Crossing the Bar* or even something like *A Child's Garden of Verses* will afford you convenient proof. These poems are in themselves answers to the question, "Why read poetry?"

Summary

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF POETRY

It is difficult to put into exact words the difference between poetry and prose. The dividing line is often shadowy because much so-called prose has poetic qualities and much so-called poetry prosaic qualities. A good deal of what we commonly regard as prose is, in essence, poetry, and a good deal

more of what we commonly regard as poetry is, in essence, prose.

We are likely to classify any writing in rhyme and meter as poetry, and any writing not in rhyme and meter as prose. The two examples given below seem to refute this theory. The one in rhyme and meter has not a spark of poetic fire; in the one without rhyme and meter the poetic fire is unquenchable. A recent critic [1] has pointed out that David's lament over Jonathan:

Difficulties of distinguishing between poetry and prose

"Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women,"

is instinct with the breath of poetry, whereas Pope's metrical paraphrase of it,

"Thy love was wondrous, soothing all my care,
Passing the fond affection of the fair."

is not much more than artificial affectation. The same critic suggests that the hopeless pathos of Isaiah's,

"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither
for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee,"

is shattered forever in Pope's rhymed version,

"No more the rising Sun shall gild the morn
Nor ev'ning Cynthia fill her silver horn."

It is clearly evident that many of the beautiful passages in the King James version of the Bible, though they are not in metrical form, are more eloquently poetical than all the rhymed couplets in existence. These verses from the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes you have only to read aloud to feel the power of their rhythm:

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, 'I have no pleasure in them';

[1] Lowes, J. L.: *Convention and Revolt in Poetry.*

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves . . . and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

And the doors shall be shut in the streets, . . . and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets;

Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken . . . or the wheel broken at the cistern

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

There is hardly an element of all that we usually regard as poetry which is not found in this passage. Here are pictures, symbols, images, phrases haunted with the accumulated connotations of man's centuries of experience with life and death. Nor is the Bible alone in possessing this poetic quality. It is found in a good deal of the best English prose, from the glowing pulsations of the finest paragraphs of Ruskin and Carlyle to the elusive lilt in the dialogue of the Irish plays of Yeats and Synge. Such passages illustrate the difficulty of distinguishing between poetry and prose. There are, however, three general characteristics of poetry, one specific, the others necessarily vague.

Regularity of metrical pattern as a characteristic of poetry

The most tangible characteristic of poetry is rhythm secured by regularity of metrical pattern. Much prose has every element of poetry except this of metrical pattern. But all poetry, even free verse, has some pattern of recurrent rhythm or rhyme, or both.

The second characteristic of poetry is that the poet uses

words with imaginative insight to suggest more than they may be defined to mean. In general, the main function of words in prose is to make statements, to present ideas and facts clearly; in poetry the main function of words is to arouse moving suggestions. This use of suggestive words stirs our feelings and imaginations. We have all experienced the baffled sensation of lacking appropriate words with which to express our feelings or thoughts; and most of us have found these feelings and thoughts expressed definitively in a passage from one of the great poets. The essence of a thousand love stories, for instance, is suggested—not stated—in a single stanza by Robert Burns:

The poet's use of words

> "Had we never loved sae kindly,
> Had we never loved sae blindly,
> Never met—or never parted,
> We had ne'er been broken-hearted."

The staggering conception of eternal damnation has been summed up in a few words in Dante's *Inferno*. Over the gates of Hell, Dante says, are these words:

> "All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

The thundering significance of these few words has caught and held the imagination of generations. Such passages as these are remarkable for what they suggest rather than for what they directly state.

Many prose writers also use words which arouse our feelings and our imagination by the power of suggestion. For instance, Hawthorne's choice of figurative language to suggest his meaning is often instinctively poetic. When he says that Phœbe was as "pleasant about the house as a gleam of sunshine falling on the floor through a shadow of twinkling leaves"; when he

Poetic language in prose

describes the garden as a "green-play-place of flickering light and shade," and the humming bird as "a thumb's bigness of burnished plumage," he is using words much as a poet does, to suggest moods and pictures. But as his words have no metrical pattern, they are not poetry. Moreover, poetical prose, however beautiful, does not usually linger in the memory as does poetry. It is the poet rather than the prose writer who uses words primarily for purposes of suggestion instead of primarily for purposes of direct statement. To the poet, words in themselves are beautiful. A poet's statement of this feeling for words may be found in Anna Hempstead Branch's "Her Words" from *Songs for My Mother:*

"My mother has the prettiest tricks
Of words and words and words.
Her talk comes out as smooth and sleek
As breasts of singing birds.

She shapes her speech all silver fine
Because she loves it so.
And her own eyes begin to shine
To hear her stories grow.

And if she goes to make a call
Or out to take a walk,
We leave our work when she returns,
And run to hear her talk.

We had not dreamed these things were so
Of sorrow and of mirth.
Her speech is as a thousand eyes
Through which we see the earth.

God wove a web of loveliness,
Of clouds and stars and birds,
But made not anything at all
So beautiful as words.

They shine around our simple earth
With golden shadowings,
And every common thing they touch
Is exquisite with wings.

There's nothing poor and nothing small
But is made fair with them.
They are the hands of living faith
That touch the garment's hem.

They are as fair as bloom or air,
They shine like any star,
And I am rich who learned from her
How beautiful they are." [1]

The fundamental characteristic of poetry, however, lies in the poet's way of looking at things. His sensibilities are keener than those of other men. His imagination is more quickly aroused. Others, looking out of their windows, feel vaguely the beauty of spring; the poet translates that feeling into an imaginative picture of

The poet's attitude toward the world about him

"Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty."

The poet's senses are keener: odor, sound, touch, and taste make an immediate appeal to him. He sees and hears with finer sensibilities than other men, and writes of

"The coming musk rose full of dewy wine
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves."

Then, too, his emotions are more deeply stirred. Most of his writing is done under stimulus of the strong feelings created in him by his imagination. Life to him is, first of all, an imaginative experience. To him

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DRURY LANE THEATER IN 1778

Showing the screen scene in Sheridan's *School for Scandal*
(From a model in the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University)

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COMPTON WYNGATES, ENGLAND

This house, built in the 16th century, illustrates the influence of the Renaissance in architecture.

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THE MIDDLE TEMPLE HALL

In this magnificent Elizabethan hall, THACKERAY, as a student of law, often dined. He describes the place in *Pendennis*.

"The meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

The poet and Nature

For him Nature is rarely disassociated from feeling. He observes that

"The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;"

and this beautiful picture creates in him a feeling which causes him to add,

"But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath pass'd a glory from the earth."

Sometimes his imagination carries him further than this, and he associates himself with Nature till he becomes one with her, as Shelley does in his invocation to the West Wind:

"Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own?
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!"

The poet's attitude toward man

In his attitude toward man, also, the poet is moved primarily by his imagination. Perhaps because of this, he sees into the heart of man and interprets truly what he sees there. Tennyson, for instance, in his shorter lyrics of purely personal emotion has given almost perfect expression to the feeling of grief for

"what has been
And never more will be"

which is common to us all. In this ability to speak for all mankind the poet is the representative of the race. He feels for all the world when he cries:

"Rough wind, that moanest loud
Grief, too sad for song;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all night long;
Sad storm, whose tears are vain,
Bare woods, whose branches strain,
Deep caves and dreary main,—
Wail, for the world's wrong!"

This sympathy and this ability to express what we all feel but cannot all say are the supreme gifts of the poet to us—consolation in hours of despair, loneliness and pain; sympathy and understanding in moments of joy. It is from him, too, that we get our truest sympathy for those about us, through him that we hear

"The still sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue."

Summary

All this is only another way of saying that the poet's imagination is more sensitive to all that touches it than other men's. Through it, his very senses are made more keen; he sees and hears and feels in the world about him subtle beauty or ugliness which quite escape us. Through it, also, he is able to interpret what he feels so that there is nothing that his imagination touches

"But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange."

Here, then, are ample reasons why an appreciation of poetry makes one's knowledge of life more keen and his understanding of it more sympathetic. The language of poetry is the truest language of the human heart.

THREE ELEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN STUDYING POETRY

There are three elements to be found in any poem. These are:

(1) The imagination. As we have seen, one of the chief differences between prose and poetry lies in the greater sensitiveness of the poet's imagination. It is through his imagination alone that the poet makes his appeal to our senses, our feelings, and even our intellects.

(2) The thought of the poem. Many poems present through the medium of imagination ideas which are well worth the reader's serious study, though these ideas are more often suggested than directly stated because the poet finds it more natural and more effective to express himself through suggestion than through direct statement. Some of the deepest and most enduring thoughts that have come to man have been expressed through the medium of poetry.

(3) The form. Form is the technical means by which the poet expresses his feelings or his ideas, through sound, images, pattern, and other mechanical devices. This is the most tangible, as well as the most technical, part of the study of poetry.

HOW THE POET USES THE IMAGINATION TO CREATE FEELING

One of the chief functions of the imagination in poetry lies in its power to create feeling. One may read prose in the pursuit of information or ideas or just to get a good story, but if a man likes poetry at all he likes it because it appeals to some sort of emotion that he has himself felt or can understand.

Universality of appeal

The chief standard by which we judge the emotional appeal of a poem is its universality. Almost without exception all great works of art have dealt with the eternal passions, aspirations, and re-

grets that fall to the lot of every human being, whether they flow from

> "old, unhappy, far-off things,
> And battles long ago;"

or from

> "Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
> That has been, and may be again."

Indeed no matter how trite the subject matter of a poem or how slipshod and sentimental its language, it is sure of an appreciative audience if it touches a familiar chord.

What most of us need to learn, however, is how to distinguish between the trite, sentimental, or cheap expression of a universal theme, which we find in songs like *The Vacant Chair*, and the artistically perfect expression of the same theme in a poem like Tennyson's *Break, Break, Break*. It is true that the surest touchstone of enduring quality in a work of art is the universality of its appeal; but this alone is not enough to stamp a work of art as great or even to make it a work of art at all. Whittier's *Barefoot Boy*, for instance, is not a great poem, but it appeals to a reminiscent, somewhat sentimental feeling that we all have toward boyhood. That much loved Hoosier poet, James Whitcomb Riley, certainly did not write a great poem in *A Life Lesson*, but he did make an instant appeal to all of us who have suffered from broken dollies and broken teasets and broken hearts and who are wistfully aware that

> "The rainbow gleams
> Of our youthful dreams
> Are things of the long ago."

Assuredly, a universal emotional appeal will make a poem popular, bringing pleasure and comfort to many, but it cannot be taken as a guarantee of greatness. There must be

other tests of greatness, of which universality of appeal is only one element.

Besides being universal, the emotion inspired by a poem must be genuine, not affected, but it must be justified—that is, it must not only be genuine, but it must spring from some sufficient cause. We sing that somewhat limp song,

Justice and sincerity of appeal

> "Sing me to sleep, thy hand in mine,
> Our fingers as in prayer entwine,"

without realizing that we should not want to feel quite that way on so slight a provocation even if we could. We quaver out falsetto notes,

> "It seems like a year since I've seen you, dear,
> Yet I know it's been only a day,"

without realizing that, after all, we could not feel quite so grieved as that about it. The feeling in such verses is not justified.

Sometimes, however, it is difficult to decide whether the emotional appeal of a poem is real and justified. This is because great poets often write poems expressing great emotion on subjects which seem to us not to warrant so much feeling. Keats is often misjudged in this respect. One of his most beautiful poems, the *Ode to a Nightingale,* is a case in point. It begins,

> "My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
> My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
> Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
> One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
> . . . . . .
>
> O, for a draught of vintage, that hath been
> Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
> . . . . . .

That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:
Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
. . . . . .
And leaden-eyed despairs."

Now this doubtless seems like strong language to many people who may never have heard a nightingale, or who, even if they have, have never felt quite that way about it. Certainly it offers a problem as to the justice of the emotional appeal of the poem, although the power of the language leaves no question of its sincerity. What we must do here is to yield ourselves to the spell of the imaginative picture that Keats has created. That is real, based on a genuine experience beautifully recreated in phrase after phrase laden with poetic suggestion of gardens and dim trees drenched with moonlight and dew, and flooding it all the song of the bird,

"Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

No one who has had the emotional experience of yielding to the imaginative appeal of this poem will stop to question further; he can only be grateful that the song of the nightingale so long ago should have created such a lasting heritage of beauty for us. There is no better way of judging the sincerity and enduring justice of a poem than by studying the power and beauty of its language.

We must also be sure that there is no break in the feeling

of a poem from beginning to end. You have doubtless noticed in a theater that the actor whose big scene is once spoiled by careless laughter cannot usually get back his grip on the feelings of the audience. This principle is doubly true in lyric poetry where the emotional spell is necessarily a brief one. A single prosaic line in the most impassioned lyric in the world is almost sure to ruin the whole poem. Tennyson's *Maud*, for instance, contains some love poetry of a very high order, but the genuine ecstasy of one section is broken by this stanza,

Continuity of appeal

> "I kiss'd her slender hand
> She took the kiss sedately;
> Maud is not yet seventeen,
> But she is tall and stately."

A few stanzas so tempting to one's sense of the ridiculous as this would ruin any poem. The emotional appeal of a poem should, therefore, be sustained throughout.

There are two other standards by which we may judge the appeal of a poem to our feelings, though they are considerations which need not necessarily have any bearing upon its greatness. The first of these is the range of emotional power displayed in a poem. This does not concern the lyric, since most lyric poetry is the expression of a single mood. Judged by this standard some of our greatest poets take a comparatively low place. Keats's range is practically limited to the marvelous portrayal of beauty in its appeal to the senses. Wordsworth's greatness lies in his power of infusing the simplest of themes with tragic, sometimes almost exalted, intensity and beauty. Coleridge lives for a few passages of simple descriptive power, and for two or three single poems like *Christabel* and *The Ancient Mariner*, that reach imaginative heights of a strange, unearthly kind which no other poet has attained.

Range of emotional power

Poe's poetry has little claim to immortality except its sheer music unencumbered by ideas. Burns is the great song writer. Some poets live for a single lyric. But the chief reason why we place Shakespeare and Milton and Browning high at the head of the list of English poets is that they display a range of powers far beyond that of the others. The sensuous richness of Keats's imagery and the white radiance of Shelley's imagination, "pinnacled dim in the intense inane," are beyond the reach of any other single poet. But Shakespeare is beyond Keats and Shelley and all others, not in the one particular in which they surpass him, but in the stupendous length and breadth and depth of his power to understand and to express almost the whole range of human feeling. Therefore, although range of imagination does not enter into our estimate of lyrical poetry, it is a most important consideration as far as the relative greatness of individual poets is concerned.

Depth of emotional appeal

The other standard by which we measure the relative emotional value of a poem is the comparative depth of feeling it expresses. Obviously a gay little lyric like Constable's

> "Diaphenia like the daffadowndilly,
> White as the sun, fair as the lily,"

or a sweetly insincere one like Carewe's,

> "Ask me no more where Jove bestows
> When June is past, the fading rose;
> For in your beauty's Orient deep
> These flowers, as in their causes, sleep,"

cannot be ranked as great poetry, though they are charming of their kind. This difference in depth, however, should not lead us to lay too great stress upon comparative rank of feeling. A poem is meant to be a joy for what it is,

not criticised for not being what it was never intended to be.

An excellent opportunity for studying the relative depths of the emotional appeal in poetry is to be found in two poems dealing with the love of home, one by Longfellow and one by William Ernest Henley. Longfellow's is a quiet, pleasant little lyric with a gentle fluttering of dove-like feeling.

"Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt;
To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest;
The bird is safest in its nest;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky;
To stay at home is best."

As you see, this is not a very profound feeling nor is it intended to be. The meter and the rhymes are suggestive of no deeper agitation than a quiet rustling of wings to rest. But the other poem, a more passionate variation of the same general theme, has all the throbbing eagerness of the homesick heart.

It runs, in part, as follows:

"O, Falmouth is a fine town with ships in the bay,
And I wish from my heart it's there I was to-day;
I wish from my heart I was far away from here,
Sitting in my parlour and talking to my dear.

For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want to be.
Our topsails are hoisted, and we'll away to sea.
O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken tree
They're all growing green in the old countrie.

. . . . . .

O, there's a wind a-blowing, a-blowing from the west,
And that of all the winds is the one I like the best,
For it blows at our backs, and it shakes our pennon free,
And it soon will blow us home to the old countrie.
For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want to be.
Our topsails are hoisted, and we'll away to sea.
O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken tree
They're all growing green in the old countrie."

When you have studied a bit more the details of poetic technique, you will be able to pick more than one flaw in this little poem, but you will never be able to challenge the conviction of the homesick pound of its rhythm and its yearning refrain. If you would carry the comparison further, there are many other poems which afford excellent opportunity for studying the depth of emotional appeal and the power with which it is expressed in poetry. Among these are Burns's

"My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer,"

and Allan Cunningham's

"Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain I wad be
O hame, hame, hame to my ain countree!"

and that famous section from Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* beginning

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
'This is my own, my native land!'"

and, perhaps best of all, Browning's

"O, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!"

In this last poem the meter, pounding in a steady crescendo up to the breathless climax, shows how the poet creates feeling. A comparison of this sort is sure to sharpen your powers of critical discrimination, and increase your capacity for appreciation.

WAYS IN WHICH A POEM MAY AROUSE FEELING

There are many ways in which emotional effects in poetry are secured, four of which deserve special consideration. The first of these is by pictures. Read *The Idylls of the King*, noticing how faithfully the word-pictures not merely reflect, but actually create the mood of the story. In *The Coming of Arthur*, when all were transfigured by

Feeling created through pictures

"a momentary likeness to the King,"

the Knights stood rejoicing:

"Far shone the fields of May thro' open door
The sacred altar blossom'd white with May,
The sun of May descended on their King,
They gazed on all earth's beauty in their Queen,
. . . . . .
Then while they paced a city all on fire
With sun and cloth of gold, the trumpets blew,
And Arthur's Knighthood sang before the King:
'Blow trumpet, for the world is white with May!'"

And in *Gareth and Lynette*, when the kingdom is in the heyday of its glory, we find that:

> "The birds made
> Melody on branch and melody in mid air.
> The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd into green,
> And the live green had kindled into flowers,
> For it was past the time of Easter-day."

In the later idylls the pictures reflect the sultry heat of summer and the electric stillness that foretells the coming storm. In *Lancelot and Elaine*

> "tremulous aspen-trees
> And poplars made a noise of falling showers,"

the casement stood wide for heat, and the dawn

> "shot red fire and shadows"

flaring blood-red on Elaine's face; and

> "she mixt
> Her fancies with the sallow-rifted glooms
> Of evening and the moanings of the wind."

Later, in *The Holy Grail*, the landscape takes on an unearthly gloom lighted only by the Holy Vessel:

> "Fainter by day, but always in the night
> Blood-red, and sliding down the blacken'd marsh
> Blood-red, and on the naked mountain top
> Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below
> Blood-red."

Lancelot's mad, remorseful quest takes place over waste fields and on

> "the naked shore,
> Wide flats, where nothing but coarse grasses grew,"

and in lonely mystic castles, where he saw

> "No bench nor table, painting on the wall
> Or shield of knight, only the rounded moon
> Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea."

Still later, in *The Last Tournament,* the morning of the Tournament of Dead Innocence

> "Brake with a wet wind blowing,"

and

> "The sudden trumpet sounded as in a dream
> To ears but half-awaked, then one low roll
> Of autumn thunder, and the jousts began;
> And ever the wind blew, and yellowing leaf,
> And gloom and gleam, and shower and shorn plume
> Went down it.
> . . . . . .
> Then fell thick rain, plume droopt and mantle clung,
> And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day
> Went glooming down in wet and weariness."

And when Arthur returned from his heartsick quest against the Red Knight,

> "he climb'd
> All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping gloom,
> The stairway to the hall, and look'd and saw
> The great Queen's bower was dark,—about his feet
> A voice clung sobbing till he question'd it,
> 'What are thou?' and the voice about his feet
> Sent up an answer, sobbing, 'I am thy fool
> And I shall never make thee smile again.'"

In *Guinevere,*

> "One low light betwixt them burn'd
> Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all abroad,
> Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,

The white mist, like a face-cloth to the face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land was still,

and

"she to Almesbury
Fled all night long by glimmering waste and weald,
And heard the spirits of the waste and weald
Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan
And in herself she moan'd, 'Too late, too late!'
Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn,
A blot in heaven, the raven, flying high,
Croak'd."

The Passing of Arthur culminates the series with some of the most effective mood-painting in Tennyson. Every scene is saturated with gloom, with wet and cold and weariness. After the

"last, dim, weird battle in the west,"

"the pale king glanced across the field
Of battle,"

and saw that

"only the wan wave
Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
Tumbling the hollow hands of the fallen,
And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,
And rolling far along the gloomy shores
The voice of days of old and days to be."

No detail is omitted which might deepen the emotional tone of the poem. The

"dolorous day
Grew drearier toward twilight falling,"

and over the scene,

"the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam."

Sir Bedivere concealed Excalibur in

> "the many-knotted water-flags,
> That whistled stiff and dry about the marge,"

and when the three queens with crowns of gold came to take Arthur on the barge, he heard rise from them

> "A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
> And, as it were one voice, an agony
> Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
> All night in a waste land, where no one comes
> Or hath come, since the making of the world."

He stood long,

> "Revolving many memories, till the hull
> Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
> And on the mere the wailing died away.
> But when that moan had past for evermore,
> The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn
> Amazed him, and he groan'd, 'The King is gone!'"

There is no quality more common to poetry than this constant use of picture-making words to create mood. Many times these pictures are painted in detail, but more often they are suggested in a few words. How many pictures of cold are suggested, for instance, in each line of the opening stanza of *The Eve of St. Agnes:*

Use of pictures to suggest mood

> "St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
> The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
> The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
> And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
> Numb were the beadsman's fingers, while he told
> His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
> Like pious incense from a censer old,
> Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
> Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith."

It would be difficult to point out a better example of words to create a single vivid impression in one line. No description of cold has ever been more compelling than that one line,

"The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold."

Another instance of feeling created by pictures is found in one of Shakespeare's sonnets:

"That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold
Bare, ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after Sunset fadeth in the West,
Which by and by black night doth take away
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.
That thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong
To love that well which thou must leave ere long."

Consider the emotional effect of cold and desolation created here by just the two lines,

"Upon those boughs which shake against the cold
Bare, ruin'd choirs where late the sweet birds sang"

and you will begin to realize the magic power that very simple words may have to suggest feeling through pictures.

The first way, then, by which a poet creates feeling is through pictures, sometimes painted in detail and sometimes suggested in just a few words.

Feeling created through sound

The second common way by which the poet may create feeling is by the use of sound. We shall discuss the importance of sound in poetry somewhat in detail later; here we merely wish to suggest a few of the ways in which it helps to arouse a mood. Probably our

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Modern literature must interpret the beauty and power of modern life, which is unlike anything in the past.

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LITCHFIELD CATHEDRAL, ENGLAND

The imagination which finds beautiful expression in poetry finds equally beautiful expression in architecture.

first pleasure from the Mother Goose lines and limericks of our childhood came purely from the effect that the mere sound of the words and the swing of the meter had upon our feelings. One does not need to know the meaning of *tintinnabulation* or *Runic rhyme* to get the mood of

"How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle
In the icy air of night!
While the stars, that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells."

Neither does one need to study the Cavalier spirit in history to catch that spirit just from the sound of Browning's

"Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell,
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry as well!
England, good cheer! Rupert is near!
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here."

What difference does it make to us whether we know who Hazelrig, Fiennes, Rupert, or even Hampden were? The poem sweeps us along till we fall in with its rhythmic tread whether we know what it means or not.

Two other poets who take our feelings by storm by the very spirit of their rhythm are Scott and Burns. One does not have to read beyond the first stanza of

"Oh, young Lochinvar is come out of the west;
Through all the wide Border, his steed was the best."

or

"Pibroch of Donuil Dhu
Pibroch of Donuil
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuil,
. . . . . .
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master."

or

"Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the West Port and let me gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee!"

in order to be completely captured by the spirit of the whole poem. And of course that spirit is here created by sound alone. Even the careless rhymes of many of Scott's lyrics are happily lost in the sheer galloping beat of the meter, so absolutely does his rhythm fit his mood.

Robert Burns, too, is as great as the greatest in his adaptation of sound to feeling. Perhaps this is why he is our greatest song writer, for song is the most natural example of rhythmic expression of emotion and no writer has had a gift of spontaneous song to compare with that of Burns. It is small wonder that

"O, my luve is like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June.
O, my luve is like the melodie,
That's sweetly played in tune."

and

"Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
An I sae fu' of care?"

and

"Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce hae aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to Victory!"

and

"O, wert thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee."

have become part of the common vocabulary of love, grief, patriotism, and tenderness.

We must not make the mistake, however, of thinking that only stirring emotions are expressed by sound. The monotony of the regularly recurring accents and the deep toned, melancholy vowels of

"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!"

are more than half the secret of the effect of the poem on our feelings. The endless, hopeless weariness of the Queen's life of penance is suggested by the dragging meter of

"The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months,
The months will add themselves and make the years,
And mine will ever be a name of scorn"

in Tennyson's *Guinevere*. And quite as much of the effect of dreary desolation in these lines from the *The Passing of Arthur* is due to the mere sound of the words as to the appropriate imagery:

"and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world."

Next to pictures, indeed, sound is the chief means by which the poet creates feeling.

Feeling created through restraint

The third way in which the poet appeals to the emotions is rather by what he does not say than by what he does. We may call this *suggestive restraint.*

"The lady doth protest too much, methinks"

says Queen Gertrude of the Player Queen in *Hamlet.* And, indeed, to protest too much is one of the surest ways of creating an impression of insincerity and thus of losing the reader's sympathy. In *Twelfth Night,* for instance, there is a significant difference between the extravagant, though beautiful, sentimentality of Orsino's,

"That strain again! It had a dying fall:
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets
Stealing and giving odor! . . .
. . . . . .
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers:
Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers."

and the simple pathos of Viola's,

"she never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek."

Of course, the failure to repress one's feelings does not necessarily mean that the feeling is insincere. There are times when the strength of the poet's feelings reaches an ecstasy of love, despair, or hate that makes restraint impossible. In general, however, the poet gains far greater effect by suggesting all that he feels in a few simple words than by attempting to tear a passion to tatters.

Instances of an intense emotional effect secured through restraint may be found in most of the really great poets. Shelley's *Ozymandias*, Wordsworth's *Lucy* poems, Tennyson's *Break, Break, Break*, and Matthew Arnold's *Requiescat* suggest themselves at once. Indeed, it is significant that four of the supreme lyrics of grief in our language are expressed in the simplest of words. The hours of aching loneliness that one feels for those he has loved and lost are here concentrated into a few quiet stanzas. Two of these lyrics may be quoted to show the power of restraint.

"She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me!"

Wordsworth

Here is the deepest personal feeling suggested in the most direct and simple terms. The two simple figures in the second stanza create a complete picture in themselves and perfectly suggest all that must have existed for Wordsworth in that friendship. The last two lines

"But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me!"

are so poignant in their connotation of heartbroken grief that they have become well-nigh proverbial.

The second illustration is Tennyson's *Break, Break, Break:*

"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me."

This poem, written at "five o'clock in the morning between blossoming hedges" far inland, has become, in its perfect blending of imagery, tone color, and restraint, part of our common language of grief. Surely it is a convincing proof that a few words are often more significant than a great many.[1]

Feeling created through the power of words

Poetic suggestion

And, finally, the poet creates feeling through the power of words. It is the power of words in themselves to arouse our imaginations and to create feeling that the poet uses with greatest effect. This is the power of poetic suggestion.

A majority of the words which we use have a double significance,—that is, they have a *denotation*, or a

[1] In contemporary poetry, the lyrics of Sara Teasdale afford some good examples of this point. Let the students look up her work in an anthology such as Jessie Rittenhouse's *Little Book of Modern Verse;* Louis Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry;* Florence Wilkinson's *New Voices;* or Monroe and Henderson's *The New Poetry.*

dictionary meaning, and a *connotation*, or a wealth of suggested meanings. The word *home* is an obvious example. The dictionary definition of home is "a dwelling place" or "the abode of one's family." But how much more than that does it mean to each of us! To some it means father and mother. To some it means good things to eat and cosy attics on rainy days, or the smell of burning leaves, or

"the velvet imperial crowd—
The dahlias that reign by the gardenside."

or the swish of

"ladies' skirts across the grass,"

or

"the unmeaning beat
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet"

on the window pane. All these memories are flashed to the mind in images of forgotten sights, sounds, and smells by that one word *home*.

As we have already seen, it is the poet's power of using words so that their connotative meaning arouses our imaginations and our feelings that is his chief gift. Single vivid phrases presenting images tinged with feeling are characteristic of poetry.

Notice the picture-making force of the words in this simile from Chaucer's description of the Friar in the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales:*

"His eyen twinkled in his heed aryght
As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght,"

and the effect of haunting memories and reminiscent melancholy in the opening lines of Shakespeare's thirtieth sonnet:

"When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,"

and the successive images of purity, softness, and sweetness in Ben Jonson's:

"Have you seen but a bright lily grow
Before rude hands have touched it?
Have you marked but the fall of the snow
Before the soil hath smutched it?
Have you felt the wool of the beaver,
Or swan's down ever?
Or have smelt o' the bud of the brier?
Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag of the bee?
O, so white, O, so soft, O, so sweet, is she!"

The poet may by restraint, suggest other things than sensations and pictures. Often a single phrase will reveal the depth of a human heart. How much is suggested in a few words by Ophelia's simple response to Hamlet's brutal

"I did love you once!"

The only words her heart can utter are,

"I was the more deceiv'd"

and there are no more pathetic lines in all Shakespeare. How much pathos is condensed into one line in Wordsworth's *Michael* when the poet says that the old father, heartbroken over his son's selfishness and weakness, went forth many a day to work at clearing the land

"And never lifted up a single stone."

The denotation of words in poetry is, of course, important, even though connotation is of more value than exact definition. One has to know that "charlock" is wild mustard in order to get the picture in

"and shone far-off as shines
A field of charlock in the sudden sun
Between two showers,"

and that a "shallop" is a light swift boat in order to appreciate the adaptation of sound to sense in

"The shallop flitteth silken sailed."

It is also well to know that "mews" and "peewits" are shore-birds like our gulls in order to visualize

"The flights of mew and peewits pied
By millions crouched on the old sea wall,"

and one must look up "eygre" to learn that it means a tidal wave in order to feel the force of

"So farre, so fast the eygre drave,
The heart had hardly time to beat,
Before a shallow seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet;
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea."

It is necessary to understand the denotation of words before we can fully appreciate their connotative value.

Sometimes, however, we lay too much stress upon the denotation of proper names which at times have a connotative value quite disproportionate to their importance as allusions to history. For instance, we frequently spoil the finest figure in Keats's sonnet *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer* by stressing the anachronism of making Cortez and not Balboa the discoverer of the Pacific. To Keats the name *Cortez* stood just as effectively as that of Balboa for all the breathless, crowded suggestions of romance and discovery that he felt when he first read Chapman's *Homer:*

". . . like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

What if historically it was Balboa? Is not Cortez just as valuable for purposes of suggestion? Why ruin that breathless picture by reminding ourselves of the facts of history? We do not need a geography in hand to enjoy the richness of these lines from Keats:

> "Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
> From Fez; and spicèd dainties, every one,
> From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon."

As far as poetic suggestion is concerned, the chief value of proper names is their connotative value. Therefore besides knowing their literal meaning, we ought to be sure that words convey to us the suggestion which the poet wishes them to convey.

Summary

The chief means, then, by which the poet arouses our imagination and our feelings is through the power of his words. This is called the power of poetic suggestion because it is conveyed through the accumulated suggestive meanings of words more than through their direct denotation. It is through this power that the poet is able to suggest more in a few words than he would ever be able to say directly in many.

HOW THE POET USES FIGURES OF SPEECH

The imagination and figures of speech

When we were speaking of the different ways in which the poet uses his imagination, we called attention to the fact that through his imagination he is often able to see resemblances and differences which escape most of us. He can use this sort of imagination to combine or associate ideas, pictures, moods, or sensations in such a way as to make his meaning doubly clear and forceful.

Of course, to a certain extent, we all do this. For instance,

when we think of cold, our imagination creates for us a picture of something associated in our minds with cold—ice, or wind, or perhaps a polar bear. When we try to express the idea of dullness we instinctively think of something dull or blunt, possibly a hoe. When we wish to express forcefully the idea of thickness, we search about in our minds for something which we associate with thickness, and we say, perhaps, that the fog is so thick that we could cut it with a knife. If we wish to impress our hearers with the fact that our automobile was going very fast, we say it flew like a bird—or we leave off the direct comparison, implying it in the one word, "flew." We also express ourselves in this way through finding differences instead of similarities between things. Thus we make our idea of cold more intense by thinking of something that is hot. Our mind conjures up a picture of a day in June with its buttercups and daisies when

Figures of speech in daily conversation

> "There's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
> To be some happy creature's palace;"

and in that way make the cold outside seem more bitter. Or perhaps we try to gain an effect by exaggeration—by making mountains out of our molehills. Still again, we unconsciously substitute certain words for others closely associated with them. Thus we speak of reading Dickens instead of his books, and of watching the kettle, instead of the water in it, boil. Our imagination supplies us with many similar ways of making our meaning more effective. Most of these ways are figures of speech. A figure of speech, then, is any departure from the plain or ordinary way of expressing oneself for the purpose of making the meaning more effective.

Definition of figures of speech

The first and most common figure of speech is the simile; for instance:

"The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;"

A simile is a directly expressed comparison. It usually contains the words "like" or "as," but we should beware of placing too much stress on this fact because not all expressions containing these words are comparisons. We use similes constantly in our daily speech, but our similes are often commonplace, or exaggerated, or inappropriate. "Teeth as white as pearls" for instance is a simile so common that it has lost its force. The poet, however, uses similes with more care and with more imagination. To him, similes always reveal a new or unexpected resemblance between objects or ideas that may at first seem dissimilar. His similes often throw an unexpected light on his meaning or bring out some hidden beauty that would escape our less appreciative glance. They are like rays of light that make dim places beautiful, or like the moonlight that casts a mysterious charm over places which seem prosaic or ugly in the common light of day.

What makes a simile effective

To be effective, a simile should not be based on too great a similarity. It should always give a little thrill of surprise and pleasure to the reader. To say that an apple is as round as an orange is not effective; the objects compared are alike in too many respects. A simile is perhaps most likely to be effective if the objects compared are alike in only one respect. On the other hand, although the objects compared in a simile must not be too much alike, they must not be too different, unless one wishes them to be so for purposes of burlesque. No one would, for instance, say that an apple is as round as a tower. A simile, however, should not be commonplace. The similes of eyes blue as violets and of hair like fine-spun gold have lost by constant repetition their original force. Similar

examples from the pine "like a lonely sentinel" to the childish rhyme,

"Sugar is sweet, and so are you"

will occur to you at once. If a figure of speech is to make the meaning more effective, it goes without saying that it should not be "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable."

The most important thing about a simile, however, is that it should arouse in the mind of the reader exactly the suggestion that the poet wishes to give. Here, as always in poetry, the power of poetic suggestion is most necessary. Things that do not look at all alike may possess a hidden resemblance which the poet shows to be appropriate and compelling. But unless the resemblance is appropriate, the simile falls flat or becomes ridiculous. Sometimes we fail to see things as the poet sees them.

In Oliver Wendell Holmes's famous little burlesque, *The Ballad of the Oysterman*, he says of a drowned maiden,

"Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks,
like seaweed on a clam."

At once you realize that there are many points of actual similarity between the things compared here, but you also feel at once that the comparison is highly inappropriate. Why? Merely because the suggestions aroused by seaweed and clams are so far removed from pathos that the comparison causes laughter rather than tears. In other words, the poetic suggestion of the figure is inappropriate. In Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* among many beautiful similes there occasionally occurs a simile almost as inappropriate as this of Holmes. In *Gareth and Lynette* Tennyson, wishing to suggest the fierce brightness of the Noonday Sun's shield, uses this comparison:

"As if the flower
That blows a globe of after arrowlets
Ten-thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the fierce shield,
All sun."

Now "the flower that blows a globe of after arrowlets" is the dandelion; had a picture of the dandelion in full bloom been suggested, the comparison might have been effective. But "the globe of after arrowlets" brings a mental picture of the dandelion when it has gone to seed, no longer bright, but gray. Consequently this comparison is inappropriate.

The thing to consider in studying any figure of speech, then, is the suggestion the poet wishes to convey. If it does convey that suggestion forcefully, it is a good figure; if it conveys another suggestion or a confusing mixture of suggestions it is a poor figure.

Some similes are so appropriate that they linger in the memory. Tennyson has many such successful similes. In *Geraint and Enid*, wishing to suggest the beauty of the silk gown which Earl Doorm offers to Enid, he says:

"one among his gentlewomen
Display'd a splendid silk of foreign loom,
Where like a shoaling sea the lovely blue
Play'd into green."

This gives the reader an exact image of the color, and a picture as well. In *Lancelot and Elaine* he wishes to suggest the concentrated fury with which Lancelot's kith and kin bore down upon him in the tournament:

"They couch'd their spears and prick'd their steeds, and thus,
Their plumes driven backward by the wind they made
In moving, all together down on him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wild North Sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,

> Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,
> And him that helms it; so they overbore
> Sir Lancelot and his charger."

In spite of the somewhat involved sentence structure, this simile adds beauty and vitality to the passage and, best of all, does create the impression of concentrated fury which the author wished to convey. In *Sohrab and Rustum* Matthew Arnold wishes to suggest the idle wonder with which Rustum regarded

> "The unknown adventurous youth, who from afar
> Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth
> All the most valiant chiefs."

To do this he uses a simile so perfect in its suggestion and yet so unexpected that it would not have occurred to any mind except a poet's:

> "And Rustum came upon the sand, and cast
> His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and saw
> Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he came.
> As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,
> Eyes through her silken curtains the poor drudge
> Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes her fire—
> At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn,
> When the frost flowers the whiten'd window-panes—
> And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts
> Of that poor drudge may be; so Rustum eyed
> The unknown adventurous youth, who from afar
> Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth
> All the most valiant chiefs; long he perused
> His spirited air, and wonder'd who he was."

Contemporary poetry makes a point of selecting similes and metaphors that are unusual and yet almost startlingly appropriate. Poems by Amy Lowell, Robert Frost, Edgar Lee Masters, William Rose Benét, Edna St. Vincent Millay,

and Carl Sandburg are excellent material for a study of the use of comparisons.

Similes, then, are valuable aids to the poet, but similes that are too like or too unlike, too commonplace or too strained, fail of their effect. A successful simile arouses the mental suggestion which the poet wishes it to convey. All this is, of course, true of other figures of speech.

Summary

The second most common figure of speech is the *metaphor.* A metaphor is a comparison implied rather than stated. When Burns wrote:

Metaphors

"O my luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June,
O, my luve is like the melodie,
That's sweetly played in tune,"

he used similes to express what his love meant to him. If he had not made the direct comparison but had said, "My luve is a red, red rose," and "My luve is a melodie," he would have been using metaphors. When Tennyson said of Guinevere:

"Sea was her wrath yet working after storm,"

he meant that her wrath was *like the sea;* but he condensed his simile into a metaphor. Metaphors are extremely common in poetry and in daily speech. Indeed, most of our slang is metaphorical.

A figure of speech closely allied to metaphor and simile is *allegory.* An allegory is the description of one thing under the likeness of another. It is a sort of expanded metaphor in the form of a story usually teaching some truth or belief which the reader is left to discover. For instance, if we say, "Man's progress towards salvation is like the journey of a man who abandons home, friends, and all earthly

Allegory

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St. Joseph's Chapel, Glastonbury Abbey, England

"Bare, ruin'd choirs"

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

"Northeaster," by Winslow Homer

"Sea was her wrath yet working after storm"

pursuits in order to seek a distant city," we are using a simile. If we say, "Man's progress towards salvation is the journey of a man who abandons home, friends, and all earthly pursuits in order to seek a distant city," we are condensing that simile into a metaphor. But if we tell the story of a man's journey toward a distant city in such a way that at every point the reader realizes that our story is really the likeness of any man's progress towards salvation in this world, we have expanded our metaphor into an allegory. This particular allegory is Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, perhaps the most perfect example of prose allegory. A simple illustration of the difference between allegory, metaphor, and simile is this:

Simile: Israel is like a vine brought out of Egypt and planted in Palestine.
Metaphor: Israel is a vine brought out of Egypt and planted in Palestine.
Allegory: God brought a vine out of Egypt and planted it in Palestine.

Allegory is a very common way of teaching a lesson. The parables in the New Testament are allegories, and so are Æsop's fables.

The most striking example of this figure which you will come across in your reading of poetry is Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. In *Gareth and Lynette*, for instance, the description of the gate is allegorical. The whole idyll of *The Holy Grail* may be interpreted allegorically. In this idyll the visions of Percivale are an allegorical way of saying that Percivale must give up sensual pleasures, domestic happiness, wealth, and fame if he intends to seek the vision of God. In fact the whole series of idylls represents the eternal war between the powers of good and evil that goes on in the heart of any man who seeks to make himself

The Idylls of the King as an allegory

perfect. Many of the characters, such as the Lady of the Lake, the three Queens, Merlin, and even Arthur himself may be reduced to mere allegorical figures.

Allegory is a good way of teaching a lesson but it is often a confusing way of telling a story. If the allegorical meaning is kept clear throughout, the characters are likely to become mere abstractions; if, on the other hand, the characters and events become interesting in themselves, the allegorical meaning is likely to drop out of sight. The *Idylls of the King* illustrate this difficulty. The allegorical meaning appears only at intervals, and the lesson might perhaps have been as well taught by the story without the aid of allegory. Tennyson himself became somewhat irritated at being frequently asked to explain the allegorical significance of this or that passage or character. He often said that the *Idylls* could be read intelligently without regard to the allegory; but there are passages which seem to require the allegorical interpretation.

Difficulties of writing allegory

It is interesting to see how closely related to similes and metaphors most figures of speech are. Probably the majority of them are based on either similarity or contrast. There is *personification*, for instance. Personification is the figure of speech by which we speak of things that are not persons as though they were persons. This is a figure that is as natural for the child as for the poet. It is natural for a little girl to think of her doll as a person because by that simple expedient she can make it more real. It was natural for the pagans of antiquity to personify the forces of nature as gods and goddesses because in that way they could give expression to their instinctive feeling that these forces were guided by some Intelligent Power for some purpose which they could but dimly comprehend. The poet, especially in his simpler moods, uses personification frequently. Stevenson's little poem about the wind

Personification

is an almost perfect example of both the naturalness and the effectiveness of personification. It is natural for the child to say:

"I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!" [1]

The use of personification alone gives vitality to the child's imaginative conception of the wind here, and it also helps us to put ourselves in the child's place and enjoy the poem more. Personification is most valuable in thus quickening the imagination. The marvelous lines in *Romeo and Juliet,*

"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops:"

are fairly alive with their suggestion of coming Dawn. This is also true of Horatio's words in *Hamlet:*

"But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill."

[1] Reprinted by permission of and arrangement with Charles Scribner's Sons.

A figure that is the opposite of the simile is the *antithesis.*

Antithesis Antithesis is another word for *contrast.* We all know the effectiveness of putting black against white, the little against the great, the bright and gay against the drab and sullen. The poet uses this device often. Notice the contrast between the first two lines and the last two lines of the following stanza from Byron's *The Destruction of Sennacherib.* This stanza illustrates, too, the use of simile and antithesis in a single passage.

"Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown."

This is rather an obvious use of antithesis. Sometimes the poet uses antithesis for less easy but more startling effects. In the following selection from Tennyson's *The Last Tournament* notice the remarkable contrast between the scene of barbarous massacre in the first lines and the marvelously vivid effect of lonely quiet in the final line.

"Then the knights, who watch'd him, roar'd
And shouted and leapt down upon the fallen,
There trampled out his face from being known,
And sunk his head in mire, and slimed themselves;
Nor heard the King for their own cries, but sprang
Thro' open doors, and swording right and left
Men, women, on their sodden faces, hurl'd
The tables over and the wines, and slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman-yells
And all the pavement stream'd with massacre.
Then echoing yell with yell, they fired the tower,
Which half that autumn night, like the live North,
. . . . . .
Made all above it, and a hundred meres
About it, as the water Moab saw
Come round by the east, and out beyond them flush'd
The long low dune and lazy-plunging sea."

The figure of speech called *hyperbole* is one that is used far too freely in everyday speech. Hyperbole is exaggeration for effect. To say that we laughed till we thought we should die, for instance, is an example of the unnecessary, pointless hyperbole frequent in daily conversation. With the poet, hyperbole is useful for the rush of powerful suggestions it carries with it, as in the following passage from *The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire:*

Hyperbole

"So farre, so fast the eygre drave
The heart had hardly time to beat,
Before a shallow seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet:
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea,"

It is an interesting figure to watch, because it is so very powerful, when effective, and, when ineffective, so very flat.

Apostrophe, like hyperbole, may be easily abused. It is a form of address in which the absent are addressed as though present, the inanimate as though animate, the dead as though living. It occurs frequently in poetry. In the following examples the absent are addressed as though present:

Apostrophe

"Oh Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?"

"Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, hath flown."

In these, inanimate objects are addressed as though animate:

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;"

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude."

"Oh, Rome, my country! city of the soul!"

In these, the dead are addressed as though living:

> "Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:
> England hath need of thee!"

> "O my son Absalom, my son Absalom,
> Would God I had died for thee!"

Apostrophe usually represents an excited state of feeling. If it seems the natural overflow of powerful feelings, it is likely to arouse similar feelings in the reader; if it is used carelessly, or too frequently, it defeats its own end.

Irony is a deliberate discrepancy between what one says and what one means by what one says. It is a figure by which we make our words convey the opposite meaning from what they say. It is not, however, used to deceive, but rather to make the meaning more effective. An excellent example of irony is Antony's funeral oration in *Julius Cæsar;* here he refers to the conspirators as "honorable men" when he wishes the crowd to feel that they are actually traitors. In *Guinevere* Tennyson makes the little novice praise Guinevere in such a way that the irony of her words is apparent both to the queen and to the reader, although the novice herself is unaware of it. Used in everyday speech irony is sometimes called sarcasm. It is considered an ignoble but powerful weapon.

Irony

Metonymy means change of name. In this figure the name of one object is substituted for that of another closely associated with it in our minds. Metonymy is almost as common as metaphor in our daily speech. When we say that we read Shakespeare instead of his books we are substituting the author for his works. When we say that gray hairs should be respected, we mean that old age should be respected; and we are substituting one phrase for another associated with it. When we say the kettle boiled, or his

Metonymy

head whirled, or he writes a beautiful hand, or the pen is mightier than the sword, we are using metonymy. Metonymy combines brevity with concreteness and is therefore of great value in poetry. Usually it passes unnoticed. When Tennyson says,

"And called for flesh and wine to *feed his spears*,"

"About his feet
A voice clung sobbing,"

he is using metonymy which adds brevity and suggestiveness to his lines.

Epigram originally meant an inscription on a monument. As such inscriptions were usually short, compressing as much as possible into a few words, epigram has come to mean any saying in prose or poetry which says something true or wise in a brief pointed manner. Cæsar's "Veni, vidi, vici" is a famous illustration. Most poetry is not primarily epigrammatic, but epigrams occur in poetry fairly often.

Epigram

Figures of speech are of small consequence in themselves. Their value in poetry cannot be learned by merely cataloguing them. It is not enough to recognize a figure of speech when you see it. Figures of speech are used for a purpose; unless they fulfill that purpose they have no value. If they do not increase the suggestive power of a passage by throwing an unexpected light on its significance, by making it more vivid, by increasing its emotional appeal, or by adding clearness, force, or beauty, the poem is better off without them.

Figures of speech only a means to an end

HOW THE POET EXPRESSES HIMSELF THROUGH SOUND

"The room was so still that the tick of the clock was the only sound to be heard except the voice that was holding

its hearers fascinated. The principal slipped into the back of the room unnoticed, and beheld the problem of all past English teachers leaning over his desk spellbound by a poem. Then the principal himself fell under the spell of the voice and the enchanting story. He, too, listened breathlessly, while the redcoat troops bound the landlord's black-eyed daughter up to attention. He strained his ears to hear the horse's hoofs, '*tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot* in the distance.' He waited in suspense until the musket shattered the moonlight and the life of the black-haired girl.

"John caught his breath and leaned forward again. Would they get him? Yes, they did.

'. . . they shot him down on the highway,
Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat.'

"And to cap the climax the ghost of the highwayman comes back, so they say.

'And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.'

"The teacher laid down the book and there was a long sigh from the class. They came back to the schoolroom with a start, but the spell of the moonlight and the tragic story still hung over them. They dreaded to have it broken." [1]

Here is the poem which held them spellbound:

[1] "Making Things Make Themselves" by Vera E. Fawcett: *English Journal;* June 1924. Reprinted by permission of the author and the editor.

THE HIGHWAYMAN

PART I

I

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding—
Riding—riding—
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

II

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the thigh!
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,
His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

III

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

IV

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's red-lipped daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—

V

'One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-night,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way.'

VI

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
(Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight!)
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away to the West.

PART II

I

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at noon;
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the purple moor,
A red-coat troop came marching—
Marching—marching—
King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.

II

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale instead,
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot of her narrow bed;
Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their side!
There was death at every window;
And hell at one dark window;
For Bess could see, through her casement, the road that *he* would ride.

III

They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest;
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel beneath her breast!
'Now keep good watch!' and they kissed her.
She heard the dead man say—
Look for me by the moonlight;
Watch for me by moonlight;
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way!

IV

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours crawled by like years,
Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,
Cold, on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least was hers!

V

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the rest!
Up, she stood up to attention, with the barrel beneath her breast,
She would not risk their hearing; she would not strive again;
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;
Blank and bare in the moonlight;
And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to her love's refrain.

VI

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear;
Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot, in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up, straight and still!

VII

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot,* in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him—with her death.

VIII

He turned; he spurred to the West; he did not know who stood
Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her own red blood!
Not till the dawn he heard it, his face grew grey to hear
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the darkness there.

IX

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind him and his rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden noon; wine-red was his velvet coat,
When they shot him down on the highway,
Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat.

* * * * * * * *

X

And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding—
Riding—riding—
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.

XI

Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard;
He taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked and barred;
He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair." [1]

ALFRED NOYES

One of the chief differences between poetry and prose is that in poetry there is a rhythm secured by some regular pattern of accent or quantity, or both, whereas in prose there is only the indefinite rhythm of speech. Through sound we get the effect of the rhythm.

Sound one of the chief means of securing rhythm

Sound is also one of the chief ways of creating feeling in poetry; and the appeal to the emotions is one of the principal characteristics of poetry. Perhaps it has never occurred to you that the language of most emotions is naturally rhythmical. Why do crowds at a football game seek to express themselves in rhythmic cheering? Any one who has taken part in an athletic contest knows the feeling of intense loyalty, the burning desire to fight to the finish, that is aroused in him by hearing the rhythmic chant of "Fight, Fight, Fight, Fight" from the bleachers. Why is it that the most primitive races express themselves by rhythmic yells, swaying dances, and the steady regular beat of tom-toms? The first literary utterance of any race is poetry, largely because it is man's nature to express feelings rhythmically.

Sound creates feeling

What interests us is not the fact so much as the means

[1] From *Collected Poems*, Vol. I, by Alfred Noyes; copyright 1913, Frederick A. Stokes Company. Reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

by which the poet creates feeling by sound. His first means is, of course, rhythm secured by meter. Variations in meter affect us differently. Many of the passages already quoted—Scott's shorter lyrics, Burns' songs, Browning's *April in England*, and Tennyson's *Break, Break, Break*—illustrate this. There are many other illustrations. For purposes of comparison read aloud the following passages from *Gareth and Lynette*. In the first you will notice that the meter is hurried, uneven, with accents tumbling against each other in unexpected places. It is the account of Gareth and the Morning Star, and the meter serves largely to create the feeling of breathless haste, violence, and excitement that is essential to the passage.

How the poet uses meter to create feeling

"all at fiery speed the two
Shock'd on the central bridge, and either spear
Bent but not brake, and either knight at once,
Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult
Beyond his horse's crupper and the bridge
Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and drew,
And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his brand
He drave his enemy backward down the bridge,
The damsel crying, 'Well-stricken, kitchen-knave!'
Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but one stroke
Laid him that clove it grovelling on the ground."

The other passage comes before Gareth's fight with the Evening Star. Notice how slowly and wearily the meter drags itself along, without spirit or interest, and what utter indifference it suggests. Tennyson creates this mood largely through the meter.

"With slow steps from out
An old storm beaten, russet, many-stain'd
Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,
And arm'd him in old arms, and brought a helm
With but a drying evergreen for crest.

And gave a shield whereon the star of even
Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his emblem, shone."

In this song from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* notice how the meter pours out exultant joy up to the climax:

"Hark! Hark! the Lark at Heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With everything that pretty bin,
My Lady sweet, arise!
Arise, arise!"

Now, for purposes of contrast, turn to the weary monotony of the rhythm in this passage from *Macbeth:*

"To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,

. . . . . .

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death."

One needs to read no further to get the feeling of the passage. In these selections, however, the very sound of the words is partially responsible for the emotional effect. The harsh consonants in the description of Gareth's fight with the Morning Star and the weary sibilants creeping through the description of the arming of the Evening Star have quite as much to do with the feeling as the meter has.

Feeling created through the sound of words regardless of the meter

Sound is also important in poetry because it often helps

to make the meaning more vivid. Frequently the poet tries to make the sound of words indicate their sense, sometimes by direct imitation, sometimes by suggestion. This imitative device is *onomatopœia.* Onomatopœia is one of the most fascinating of poetic devices. As far as sound is concerned, it is the most directly suggestive device that the poet can use. Furthermore, it is as common in our daily speech as it is in poetry. A good many of our words, such as *bang, crash, crack, roar, wail,* probably owe their existence to the instinctive effort of some one to make the sound of his words suggest their sense. In the field of poetry the use of onomatopœia varies from the most obvious imitation of sounds as in Poe's *The Bells* or Vachel Lindsay's *The Congo, The Santa Fe Trail,* and *General William Booth Enters into Heaven,* to the most discriminating choice of words to suggest sounds as in Tennyson's:

Sound and meaning

Onomatopœia

> "I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
> And the wild water lapping on the crag."

There is scarcely a sound that cannot be suggested by onomatopœia. Suppose it is the galloping of horse's hoofs. There is that most famous example from Virgil:

> "Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum."

There is the deliberate imitation in the anapestic beat of many a "horseback poem," for instance, Browning's *How We Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix:*

> "Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
> Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
> . . . . . .
> Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer;
> Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good
> Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood,"

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

"I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree."

Courtesy of Famous Players-Lasky Corp.

A Street in Thrums

The quaint charm of life in a little Scotch village is revealed to us in Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy*.

and there is the American's favorite, *The Ride of Paul Revere.* Suppose the poet wishes to suggest the sound of water. One thinks at once of Southey's *Cataract of Lodore* and of Tennyson's *Brook* with its varied suggestions of running water from the noisy

"I chatter, chatter as I flow"
"I babble on the pebbles"

to the drowsy

"I murmur under moon and stars."

Then there are hundreds of isolated lines filled with suggestions of the shifting music of the waters from the roll of

"The league-long roller thundering on the reef,"

and the hiss of

"A shallow seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet,"

to the quiet of

"Save for some whisper of the seething seas."

All other sounds, too, find expression through this familiar device. One can hear the swish of silk in

"And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain,"

and the noise of battle in

"Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash
Of battle-axes on the shatter'd helms,"

and the murmuring accents of "folk at their prayers" in the old Latin hymn

"Pie Jesu, Domine,
Dona eis requiem.
Miserere, Domine,
Dona eis requiem."

and the faint answer of echoes borne "from distance beyond distance" in

> "O, sweet and far from cliff and scar,
> The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
> . . . . . .
> Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying
> And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying."

One hears the booming, hurried beat of drums in

> "The double double double beat
> Of the thundering drum,"

and the lonely wail of the wind in

> "A wind that shrills
> All night in a waste land where no one comes,
> Or hath come since the making of the world,"

and the murmur of bees in

> "The broad ambrosial lines of lofty lime
> Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end,"

and the exultant rush of a victorious army in:

> "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the
> coming of the Lord;
> He is trampling out the vintage where
> the grapes of wrath are stored,
> He hath loosed the fateful lightning
> of His terrible swift sword;
> His truth is marching on."

Sound as a source of beauty in poetry

The final reason why sound is important in poetry is that it is one of the most important sources of beauty. The poet often uses words quite apart from either the meaning they suggest or the mood they create, just because he likes the sound of them. Thus beauty of sound alone is often one of

the charms of poetry. Some poets, for instance Poe and Swinburne, have very little else to give us, but that little is enough. This musical quality in poetry is called *tone color*. Tone color often contributes feeling and onomatopœia, but it must not be confused with either of these, for it can exist quite apart from them. One does not have to know anything at all about the mood or the context of:

Tone color

"Silver sails all out of the west,"

or

"The long low dune and lazy-plunging sea,"

or

"Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,"

or

"I wield the flail of the lasting hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder."

or

"No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine,"

in order to enjoy the music of their sound. Indeed it is a question whether the passage from Swinburne's *The Garden of Proserpine* quoted above has much of any meaning apart from its music.

How tone color is secured

The ways in which tone color is secured are rather tangible and easily analyzed. These methods may seem a little mechanical when they are analyzed, but poets employ them more or less unconsciously.

The most obvious device for securing tone color is *rhyme.* Rhyme is identity or close similarity between stressed sounds in corresponding places. There are three general kinds of rhyme, beginning rhyme, or *alliteration;* middle rhyme, or *assonance;* and *end rhyme.* Assonance is found mainly in French and Spanish poetry and therefore needs no consideration in the study of English poetry. Alliteration we shall treat separately. When we say rhyme, then, we mean rhyme occurring at the end of lines, as in:

> "Sweet is true love tho' given in vain, in *vain;*
> And sweet is death who puts an end to *pain,*"

or rhyme occurring at the middle and end of a line, as in:

> "I bring fresh *showers* for the thirsting *flowers,*
> From the seas and the streams;
> I bear light *shade* for the leaves when *laid*
> In their noonday dreams."

This latter sort of rhyme is sometimes called *internal rhyme.* In the first and third lines the word at the end rhymes with the word in the middle of the line; but in the second and fourth lines the rhymes occur at the end only. This passage also illustrates two other differences in rhymes. The rhymes *streams* and *dreams, shade* and *laid* are called *masculine rhymes.* A masculine rhyme is a rhyme in one syllable. The rhymes *showers* and *flowers* are called *feminine rhymes.* A feminine rhyme is a rhyme in two syllables, the first of which is accented.

The pattern of rhymes in a poem is called its *rhyme scheme.* In analyzing a rhyme scheme, one uses the letters of the alphabet to indicate the various rhymes as they occur. The first rhyme is called *a*, and all words rhyming with it are also called *a;* the second rhyme is called *b*, and all words rhyming with it, *b;* the next rhyme is called *c*, and so on. Here is a very artificial rhyme scheme from Tennyson:

Rhyme scheme

"Her song the lintwhite swelleth, a
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth, a
The callow throstle lispeth, b
The slumbrous wave outwelleth, a
The babbling runnel crispeth b
The hollow grot replieth c
Where Claribel low-lieth." c

Notice that all these rhymes are feminine rhymes with the scheme aababcc. Considered as masculine rhymes, the ends of all the lines rhyme. The resulting effect is forced and unnatural, but it is an interesting experiment. The rhyme scheme of the following passage from Tennyson is also used in his *In Memoriam*. This effective rhyme scheme knits the first and last lines of a four-verse stanza by rhyme.

"Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky, a
The flying cloud, the frosty light: b
The year is dying in the night; b
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die." a

The following stanza from Swinburne's *A Forsaken Garden* illustrates a more elaborate rhyme scheme.

"In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland, a
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee, b
Walled round with rocks as an inland island, a
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea. b
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses c
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed d
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves
of its roses c
Now lie dead." d

There are a few obvious traps into which poets in their use of rhymes often fall. First of all, they sometimes wrench the accent of a word to make it rhyme; or, even worse, they use as rhymes sounds which are not closely similar. In *The Eve of St. Agnes* Keats rhymes *howl, foul,* and *soul, moon* and *crone, thing* and *evening, do*

Dangers in rhyme schemes

and *woe*, *sleet* and *violet!* Scott is often careless of rhymes, as in *Pibroch of Donuil Dhu* where he rhymes *glen and* with *pennon*, *shelter* with *altar*, *come* with *groom*. Byron and Browning are also sometimes careless in this respect.

Secondly, poets sometimes make their verses monotonous by using the same rhymes over and over again. After reading a page or two of their work one feels sure that *dreams* will rhyme with *gleams*, *mist* with *amethyst*, *bright* with *light*, *flowers* with *hours*, *gold* with *old* or *cold*.

Another danger in the use of rhymes is that of making the rhyme scheme too complex. Such a scheme, for instance, as a, a, b, c, c, b, d, d, b, e, e, b, f, f, b, is too elaborate. Unless the reader follows a rhyme scheme subconsciously, expectantly waiting for the recurring sounds, there is little use in it.

A second common device for securing tone color is *alliteration*. Alliteration is the repetition usually of the initial sound or sounds of a word. It is thus similar to rhyme though different in position. Sometimes, as in *The Scythe Song*, part of which is quoted below, it is highly appropriate to the sense of the poem, but often it is of value merely as beautiful sound in itself.

Alliteration

"*Hush, ah hush,* the Scythes are saying,
Hush, and heed not, and fall asleep;
Hush, they say to the grasses swaying,
Hush, they sing to the clover deep!
Hush,—'tis the lullaby Time is singing—
Hush, and heed not, for all things pass,
Hush, ah hush! and the Scythes are swinging
Over the clover, over the grass!" [1]

Andrew Lang

Of course the alliteration of the *s* sounds in this poem is suggestive of the swish of scythes in the grass; and the rhythmic sway of the meter reminds us of the regular sweep

[1] Reprinted by permission of and arrangement with Longmans, Green and Company.

of the mower's arms as they work. But even without these connotations the passage would have its value as sheer tone color secured by alliteration. In the lines:

"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow follow'd free,"

from *The Ancient Mariner*, the meter and the alliteration of f's and l's give the impression of speed, but the alliteration is also musical in itself. More often than not, alliteration is used without any particular suggestive value merely because it is pleasing to the ear. The alliteration in:

"Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine the lily maid of Astolat;"

in:

"Silver sails all out of the West;"

in:

"The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came;"

in:

"Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands"

is beautiful sound, indeed, with more value in its music than in any meaning it suggests. An excellent example of alliteration that contributes tone color, onomatopœia, and mood, all perfectly blended, can be found in Rossetti's poem *Chimes*, which suggests its idea by giving bell sounds which echo each other in haunting overtones.

Other devices for securing tone color are to be found in the use of certain vowel and consonant sounds. The deeper toned vowels, as in: **Tone color through effective vowel and consonant sounds**

"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea,"

always give a deep and melancholy music to verse, a music with "the eternal note of sadness." Other vowel sounds, such as the open ones in:

"Oh, sweet and far, from cliff and scar,"

are invaluable in suggesting a sweeter, more distant music. The liquid consonants, l, m, n, and, r, invariably soften the whole tone of a line, as in:

"Lost love—labor and lullaby
And lowly let love lie.

Late love-longing and life-sorrow
And love's life lying low;"

and

"O mistress mine, where are you roaming?"

and

"I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I loiter round my shingly bars,
I linger round my cresses."

The sibilant consonants, s and soft c, also add soft, whispering sounds to tone color, and f and v sounds help to create lightness and swiftness as well as softness. Tennyson's song,

"O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying south,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee,"

illustrates the musical effect of liquids and sibilants as well as of f and v sounds.

In blank verse, which does not depend on rhyme for its

tone color, the music is partly created by *end-stopped* and *run-on* lines and by *cesuras*. An end-stopped line is a line with a pause at its end where the reading voice drops. A run-on line is a line which has no pause at the end, in which, therefore, the sense is carried on into the next line. A cesura is a definite pause within a line. These devices for shifting the melody occur also in poetry that is not blank verse, but their effect is most noticeable where there is no rhyme. In the following passage the first two lines are run-on, the third is followed by a pause, and the last is end-stopped.

End-stopped and run-on lines

> "Till notice of a change in the dark world
> Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,
> That early woke to feed her little ones,
> Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light."

In the following stanza from one of the few successful lyrics in blank verse, the first three lines are run-on and the last two end-stopped. There are cesuras in the third and last lines.

> "Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
> The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
> To dying ears, || when unto dying eyes
> The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
> So sad, || so strange, || the days that are no more."

There is also an effective example of these devices in Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach:*

> "Listen! || You hear the grating roar — Cesura; run-on
> Of pebbles which the waves draw back and fling — Run-on
> At their return, up the high strand, — End-stopped
> Begin || and cease || and then again begin — Cesuras
> With tremulous cadence slow || and bring — Cesura; run-on
> The eternal note of sadness in."

Hear the effect of cesuras in the line:

"Begin, || and cease, || and then again begin."

The cesuras suggest the pause, the silence, and then the crash of waves again with monotonous regularity. These three devices, of course, keep blank verse, or any verse, from being monotonous, and they also give what is known as *paragraph rhythm* to the poem. Paragraph rhythm is the rhythm which flows from line to line, pausing, gathering new force, and flowing on again.

Another common device for securing tone color is the use of *refrain*. We often remember a poem because its musical and appropriate refrain lingers in our minds. All the songs in the *Idylls of the King* have refrains, from Lynette's:

Tone color secured by haunting refrain

"Shine sweetly, twice my love hath smiled on me,"

and Merlin's,

"Rain, rain, and sun, and rainbow in the sky,"

to the little novice's hauntingly sad and appropriate

" 'Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late! Ye cannot enter now!"

The refrains in *Tears Idle Tears* with their subtle variations, in the *Bugle Song*, and in *Sweet and Low* are other notable examples. The whole effect of William Morris's *The Gilliflower of Gold* is secured by the refrain:

"Hah, hah! la belle jaune giroflée."

Summary

Sound is important in poetry, then, because it creates rhythm and feeling, and because it contributes onomatopœia and tone color. Onomatopœia suggests the sense of words by their sound. Tone color is music secured

by the arrangement of vowel and consonant sounds. Tone color is secured chiefly by rhyme, alliteration, effective use of vowels combined with musical consonants, by end-stopped and run-on lines and cesuras, and by musical refrain.

HOW THE POET EXPRESSES HIMSELF THROUGH SYMBOLS AND IMAGES

Closely allied to figures of speech are *symbols* and *images*. By image we mean a word-picture that stands in the poet's mind for an idea. A picture may incidentally help to create a mood, but unless it stands for an idea in the poet's mind, we do not think of it as an image. In Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar* the lines:

"Sunset and evening star"

and

"Twilight and evening bell"

are pictures that stand for the idea of quiet consummation and lasting peace that death brings to us all. In Lowell's lyric:

"Violet! sweet violet!
Thine eyes are full of tears;
Are they wet
Even yet
With the thought of other years?"

it is difficult to attach any definite idea to the suggested picture of the violet, but in Wordsworth's:

"A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye,"

the picture is felt clearly to stand for a trait of character, modesty, which is an idea. Shelley's reference to the violet,

"Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken,"

does more than create a mood; it also serves as an image of the idea of the imperishable quality of beauty. In Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach* the picture of the sea creates a mood, and it also stands in Arnold's mind as the living image of an idea:

> "The sea is calm to-night.
> The tide is full, the moon lies fair
> Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
> Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
> Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
> Come to the window, sweet is the night air!
> Only, from the long line of spray
> Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
> Listen! You hear the grating roar
> Of pebbles which the waves draw back and fling,
> At their return, up the high strand,
> Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
> With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
> The eternal note of sadness in."

And, as if he feared lest we fail to perceive that this picture is but the image of an idea to him, he proceeds to explain:

> "Sophocles long ago
> Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
> Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
> Of human misery; we
> Find also in the sound a thought,
> Hearing it by this distant northern sea."

Then he explains in even more elaborate detail just what idea this picture stands for in his mind. To him that ebbing tide with its "melancholy, long, withdrawing roar" is but the image of the ebbing tide of Faith:

> "The Sea of Faith
> Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
> Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd,

But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world."

One could not well ask for a more perfect image to make clear an idea. Another excellent example occurs in Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*. In the last section of the poem, beginning:

"But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight,"

the river is an image of man's destiny:

"A foil'd circuitous wanderer—till at last
. . . . . .
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea."

Contemporary poetry has laid great stress upon the use of images; indeed, certain contemporary poets have called themselves "imagists." But the more conservative modern poets have also used images freely. Edwin Markham chooses these images to describe the character of Abraham Lincoln:

"The color of the ground was in him, the red earth;
The smack and tang of elemental things:
The rectitude and patience of the cliff;
The good-will of the rain that loves all leaves;
The friendly welcome of the wayside well;
The courage of the bird that dares the sea;
The gladness of the wind that shakes the corn;
The pity of the snow that hides all scars;
The secrecy of streams that make their way
Under the mountain to the rifted rock;

The tolerance and equity of light
That gives as freely to the shrinking flower
As to the great oak flaring to the wind—" [1]

In "*Frost To-night*" Edith M. Thomas gives us a picture that suggests both a mood and an idea:

"Apple-green west and an orange bar;
And the crystal eye of a lone, one star . . .
And, 'Child, take the shears and cut what you will,
Frost to-night—so clear and dead-still.'

Then I sally forth, half sad, half proud,
And I come to the velvet, imperial crowd,
The wine-red, the gold, the crimson, the pied,—
The dahlias that reign by the garden side.

The dahlias I might not touch till to-night!
A gleam of shears in the fading light,
And I gathered them all,—the splendid throng,
And in one great sheaf I bore them along.

. . . . . .

In my garden of Life with its all late flowers
I heed a Voice in the shrinking hours:
'Frost to-night—so clear and dead-still' . . .
Half sad, half proud, my arms I fill." [2]

An image, then, is a mental picture used, not merely to create a mood but also to stand for an idea.

Symbols

A *symbol* is much like an image except that it is not necessarily a picture. It is any concrete object used to stand for an abstract idea. The cross, for instance, is a symbol for Christianity, the crescent for Mohammedanism, the stars and stripes for the United States. The use of symbols is natural. Certain objects are almost universally used to stand for certain ideas. The Rock of Gibraltar

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[2] Reprinted by permission of and arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

serves as a symbol for anything firm and unshakable. Mountains have always stood in men's minds for the eternal strength and patience of God.

> "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
> From whence cometh my help,"

cried the Psalmist. Similarly the sea has always been a symbol for the vast unknown deep whence came the soul of man and whither it will return again,

> "When that which drew from out the boundless deep
> Turns again home."

Poetic suggestion, as you can readily see, is at the very core of symbolism. Nothing is more suggestive than a good symbol, but nothing is more confusing than a vague, uncertain one. If it is to have force, there must be no doubt in the mind of the reader as to what the symbol suggests. The *Idylls of the King*, being allegorical, naturally contain many symbols, some of which, like Excalibur, are clear; but others of which, like Merlin's Siege Perilous, are vexingly vague. In Tennyson's *Flower in the Crannied Wall* there is a definite, effective symbol wherein a tiny flower stands for the whole mystery of existence:

Dangers of symbolism

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower—but *if* I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is."

Symbols and images, then, are ways of effectively suggesting an idea. An image is a word picture that stands for an idea; a symbol is a concrete object that stands for an idea. The suggestion aroused by each must be clear.

Summary

THE THOUGHT IN POETRY

"It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May
Although it fall and die that night;
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see,
And in short measures, life may perfect be."

Poetry deals with thought as well as feeling

If there were nothing more to poetry than the qualities which we have discussed, it would be difficult to see why this stanza from one of Ben Jonson's poems is great poetry. It has no definite mood; it makes no strong appeal to the emotions. It is not primarily the expression of feeling; it is not just a beautiful picture, or a startling figure of speech; it is not remarkable for its tone color. True, there is an image, the image of the lily, "the plant and flower of light." But this image is valuable because it expresses an idea, the idea that perfection is not necessarily measured in terms of time or space or size. The lily, which blooms and dies in a single day, is said to be as perfect as anything in the world. Here we come upon a new beauty in poetry. This is the beauty of ideas. Poetry deals with thought as well as feeling.

How the poet's imagination works

Sometimes a poet is not content merely to create pictures, feelings, or sounds. He feels in the beauty which he sees a deeper significance than can be expressed in terms of mere feeling or sensation. He looks out of his window and sees a tree; his imagination is stirred by its beauty and he writes:

"I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree."

Then his imagination roves and he attributes to the tree feelings such as human beings have. He writes:

"A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the sweet earth's flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain."

With his imagination still more deeply stirred, he feels an underlying spiritual significance in his imaginative experience with the tree. He is touched with reverence at the thought that God made such beauty for him to see. He concludes his poem with a childlike simplicity that conveys a lesson in humility:

"Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree." [1]

The poet, feeling a truth, expresses it through his imaginative insight. He may have beliefs which he cannot prove to be true, but his imagination finds comparisons that help to make clear the reasons for his faith. Thus the poet says:

The poet expresses his ideas imaginatively

"I never saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.

[1] From *Trees and Other Poems* by Joyce Kilmer; copyright 1914 by George H. Doran Company, publishers. Reprinted by permission of and arrangement with the publishers.

I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in Heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given." [1]

Emily Dickinson

The difference between poetry and prose here is that poetry expresses its deepest truths through the medium of the imagination whereas prose reasons out its truths through analysis. The propositions of Euclid are intellectual and analytical; they must therefore be expressed in prose. But man's hunger and thirst after righteousness, his burning passion for truth and beauty have their deepest roots in his heart; he must therefore express them in terms of imagination and feeling, which are the language of poetry.

The difference between ideas as expressed in poetry and ideas as expressed in prose

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know;"

says the poet, expressing his idea as a passionate conviction. Only through imaginative sympathy with the poet can this difficult idea be grasped; it cannot be coldly reasoned out. That is why many analytical, literal-minded people cannot understand poetry. They are not in the habit of arriving at ideas through the imagination. "The heart has its reasons that reason knows not of," said a wise Frenchman who, though he was a mathematician, was thinking then like a poet.

The poet teaches truths largely through suggestion. His preference for suggestion rather than direct statement is one of his chief differences from the prose writer. For instance, suppose he wishes to teach that all things save God's greatness are transient. Instead of a detailed sermon he

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writes a suggestive little story containing a symbol for his idea:

"A certain pasha, dead five thousand years,
Once from his harem fled in sudden tears,

And had this sentence on the city's gate
Deeply engraven, 'Only God is great.'

So these four words above the city's noise
Hung like the accents of an angel's voice.

And evermore from the high barbican,
Saluted each returning caravan.

Lost is that city's glory. Every gust
Lifts, with crisp leaves, the unknown pasha's dust,

And all is ruin, save one wrinkled gate
Whereon is written, 'Only God is great.'" [1]

Thomas Bailey Aldrich

Thought suggested through a picture

Suppose the poet is impressed not so much with the greatness of God as with the futility of human greed and cruelty, passion and arrogance. Instead of a sermon he gives us a picture that impresses his idea on us unforgettably. See what Shelley teaches with wonderful restraint in *Ozymandias:*

"I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: 'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings.

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Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

This poem shows that suggestion can teach as much as direct preaching. The poet does not hide his thought. He wishes our imagination to grasp the suggestion of what he has said because to him the imagination is more luminous than reason. Shelley had no desire to mystify us; he wished us to grasp the meaning he saw in that picture; and he thought we should see it in the light of the imagination more clearly than if it were given us by means of a card catalogue.

Thought in poetry not hidden

The poet can also tell us directly what he thinks. Many a sermon lingers in our minds because it is cast in rhythmic form. This is true of Carlyle's:

The poet may teach directly

"So here hath been dawning
Another blue day:
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away.

Out of Eternity
This new day was born;
Into Eternity
At night will return.

Behold it aforetime
No eye ever did;
So soon it for ever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue day;
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away."

A poet, then, may express his ideas directly as Carlyle does in this poem, as Bryant does in *Thanatopsis*; or he may

merely suggest them as Shelley does in *Ozymandias;* or he may use an image or a symbol following it by direct application of his thought as Ben Jonson does in the poem quoted earlier. He may use allegory, as Tennyson does in the *Idylls of the King;* or a story as Thomas Bailey Aldrich does in his poem about the gate whereon was graven, 'Only God is great' and as Leigh Hunt does in *Abou Ben Adhem;* or a symbol as Oliver Wendell Holmes does in *The Chambered Nautilus* and as Edward Rowland Sill does in *Opportunity;* or images as Emily Dickinson does in *Chartless.* Any method that is imaginatively appropriate is effective provided that the poem does not degenerate into mere didacticism.

How the teaching of a poem may be expressed

Besides appeal to the imagination poetry also appeals to our minds. It does this through suggestion rather than through direct statement, however, and in this way often conveys profoundly true and beautiful ideas so that we see them in the light of imagination as well as of reason.

Summary

THE FORMAL ELEMENT IN POETRY

Like music, poetry is divided into certain time intervals; that is, in each are a certain number of beats or accents coming at more or less regular intervals of time. In English poetry there may be a highly irregular number of syllables coming between the heavily accented beats, but the beats themselves usually come with some regularity. The syllables in a line correspond roughly to the notes, and the beats to the time in music.

Accents and time intervals

The technical names for these beats and syllables are borrowed from the Greek. A line with only one accent is called *monometer;* for example:

Terminology for the number of beats

"Away!"

A line with two accents is called *dimeter;* for example:

"Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly
Young, and so fair!"

A line with three heavily accented beats is called *trimeter;* for example:

"O, to be in England
Now that April's there."

A line with four heavily accented beats is called *tetrameter;* for example:

"The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade."

A line with five heavily accented beats is called *pentameter;* for example:

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank."

A line with six heavily accented beats is called *hexameter;* for example:

"This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks

. . . . . .

Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic."

A line with seven heavily accented beats is called *heptameter;* for example:

"Oh East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet."

A line with eight heavily accented beats is called *octameter;* for example:

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary."

Trimeter, tetrameter, and pentameter are the most common beats in English verse. Monometer is found usually in single lines, not in whole stanzas. Dimeter is not usually kept throughout a poem unless the poet wishes to rain blows thick and fast to gain speed. A good example of dimeter used for this purpose is Scott's *Pibroch of Donuil Dhu.* Hexameter is occasionally found, notably in Longfellow's *Evangeline* and in some of Byron's lyrics. Byron, too, sometimes uses heptameter. Kipling has become known for his use of the heptameter. Octameter is rare. A line with seven or eight stresses almost always breaks in two and therefore is better written as two lines.

Most common accent patterns in English

You will notice that the beats come more or less regularly but that the lightly stressed syllables between the beats vary in number. One of these time intervals measured by a heavily accented beat is called a *foot.* The line is named for the number of heavily accented beats; the foot is named for the number of syllables and the position of its accent. These names, too, are borrowed from the Greek. A foot of two syllables with the accent on the second syllable is called an *iambus,* for example:

The foot in poetry

˘ ´
defy.

A foot of two syllables with the accent on the first syllable is called a *trochee,* for example:

happy.

A foot of two syllables with the accent evenly divided between them, neither being stressed more than the other is called a *spondee,* for example:

gray stones.

A foot of three syllables with the accent on the first syllable is called a *dactyl;* for example:

merrily.

A foot of three syllables with the accent on the third syllable is called an *anapest,* for example:

intercede.

A foot of three syllables with the accent on the second syllable is called an *amphibrach,* for example:

Flow gently.

At any time a rest may be substituted for a lightly stressed syllable. Omitted syllables are always unaccented ones left off at the beginning or end of a line. An example is:

"Break, break, break."

Lines like this are called *truncated* lines.

Feminine endings

Lightly stressed syllables are sometimes found at the beginning or end of a line. An unaccented syllable at the end of a line makes it a *feminine ending.*

"When the | lamp is | shattered, 1
The light | in the dust | lies dead; 2

When the | cloud is | scattered, 3
The rain | bow's glo | ry is shed." 4

Here there is an unaccented syllable at the end of the first and third lines. It is, however, part of the normal foot of the line. Sometimes the unaccented syllable at the beginning or end of a line is an extra syllable.

The metrical pattern of a poem takes its name from the number of heavily accented syllables and the prevailing foot in the line.

Names of metrical patterns

"This Ci | ty now | doth, like | a gar | ment, wear
The beau | ty of | the morn | ing; si|lent, bare."

Here there are five heavy accents to a line. The line is therefore pentameter. Each foot is an iambus. The whole line is, therefore, *iambic pentameter*.

"Ever | let the | Fancy | roam. (rest)
Pleasure | never | is at | home." (rest)

Here each line has four heavy accents. The line is therefore tetrameter. Each foot is a trochee, although in the last foot of each line the unaccented syllable is omitted. The whole line is, therefore, *trochaic tetrameter*.

"The Assy | rian came down | like the wolf | on the fold
And his co | horts were gleam | ing in pur | ple and gold.

Here each line has four heavy accents and each foot is an anapest. The metrical pattern, therefore, is *anapestic tetrameter*.

"Warriors and | chiefs! should the | shaft or the | sword
Pierce me in | leading the | host of the | Lord,"

Here, as there are four heavy accents, the line is tetrameter. The feet are dactyls, with the two lightly stressed syllables at the end of the line omitted. The pattern is, therefore, *dactylic tetrameter.*

"Flow gently, | sweet Afton, | among thy | green braes."

Here the line is also tetrameter, but the first three feet are amphibrachs and the last preferably a spondee. As a line is named for the number of accents and the prevailing foot, this line is *amphibrachic tetrameter.*

Inadequacy of the Greek terminology

Most poetry is comparatively easy to scan, but some lines are hard to explain by the Greek terminology. This is because these terms were borrowed from Greek poetry from which English poetry differs in various ways. Greek and Latin poetry paid as much attention to the arrangement of lightly stressed and heavily stressed syllables as they did to the heavy beats themselves. English poetry, however, gets its rhythm from the regularly recurring heavily accented syllable; in it, the lightly stressed syllables are of only secondary importance. The first Anglo-Saxon poetry secured its rhythm chiefly by heavy beats occurring and reverberating at regular intervals. It is from Anglo-Saxon sources that our poetry is derived. The Greek patterns therefore are not rigidly followed in English poetry. Our modern "free verse" has recurrent rhythm, although it disregards rigid stanza form. *Dover Beach* is not bound by any definite stanza form, but its recurrent rhythm is definitely felt. One does not need to reduce

"The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months
The months will add themselves and make the years,

to classical terminology in order to feel the rhythmical effect. One can get the feeling of hesitation in

"First as in fear, step after step, she stole
Down the long tower stairs, hesitating"

without worrying about its irregular feet. And one can hear the breathless mutter in

"Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, Quick!' "

and the gallop of horses in

"The sound of many a heavily galloping hoof"

and the dignified roll of congregational music in

"Singing the hundredth Psalm, that grand old Puritan anthem,"

even if one does not know much about Greek meter. Nevertheless these names help to make metrical effects tangible and lead to a keener appreciation of the poet's art.

The meter of a poem should be adapted to the mood of the subject matter. In the selections quoted, it is clear that the meter is skilfully varied in order to suggest the mood which the poet wishes to create. Often within the same poem the meter is shifted to harmonize with the changing mood. When the meter is inappropriate for the mood, the poem necessarily loses in effectiveness.

Meter adapted to subject matter

PATTERN IN POETRY

As we have seen, one of the most tangible differences between poetry and prose is that the words of poetry are arranged in some definite pattern of rhythmically harmonious verses. Some poetic patterns are simple, some complex; most of them except those of free verse are more or less rigid in form.

Pattern in poetry is the plan according to which a stanza

is built up. A *stanza* is a definitely arranged group of rhythmically harmonious verses. The structural unit of the stanza is the *verse* which is a single line of poetry. We determine the pattern of a poem either by its stanza form or by its verse form. If a poem is not divided into stanzas, we determine its pattern by its metrical name and its rhyme scheme. If a poem is divided into stanzas, we determine its pattern by the number of verses in a stanza, by the metrical name of these verses, and by the rhyme scheme of the whole stanza.

Pattern, stanza, and verse

Among the most common forms in English poetry is *blank verse* which is unrhymed iambic pentameter. As we have already seen, the rhythm in blank verse is saved from monotony and given what is known as paragraph structure by the skilful use of end-stopped and run-on lines and cesuras. It is the easiest kind of poetry to write poorly and the hardest to write well, for it depends on exceedingly subtle variations in the meter for perfect rhythm and tone color. The best blank verse in English is found in Shakespeare's plays, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in certain sections of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, in Matthew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, and in Keats's *Hyperion*. The *Idylls of the King* are not perfect blank verse, but they offer numerous examples of the varied tone color that may be secured by it. Sections of *The Passing of Arthur* are particularly worth study for the shifting accents and the surging ebb and flow of the rhythm. The *Idylls of the King* contain interesting experiments in the adaptation of sound to both sense and mood.

Blank verse

The *rhymed couplet* is a poem made up of iambic tetrameter lines rhyming successively a, a, b, b, c, c, etc.

Rhymed couplets and heroic couplets

"Around their prows the ocean roars
And chafes beneath their thousand oars."

The *heroic couplet* has the same rhyme scheme and the same iambic foot, but it is pentameter (five-stress) instead of tetrameter (four-stress).

"Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair."

Couplets are easy to write, and are effective in light, epigrammatic verse or any verse that requires speed. They are, however, difficult for slow movement as they are in constant danger of becoming monotonous and trivial. For this reason Keats refers to them scornfully as "rocking-horse" meter. Some modern poets have used couplets skilfully in long poems without making them monotonous. They achieve their effect by variation in the rhyme scheme and by the use of end-stopped and run-on lines and of cesuras. John Masefield's *Reynard the Fox* is a particularly striking example of what may be done with this pattern of the rhymed couplet. Dryden and Pope, poets of the eighteenth century, are famous for their brilliant use of the heroic couplet.

The *tercet* pattern is a stanza form made up of three verses, usually, but not always, iambic tetrameter, rhyming variously. Sometimes stanzas in this pattern are knit together by rhyming the last line of one stanza with the first line of the next. Sometimes the three lines of a stanza rhyme, for example:

Tercet

"Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet
Womanhood and childhood fleet!"

The *quatrain* is a four-verse stanza. The most familiar form of the quatrain is the old English ballad meter, which is a stanza made up of alternating iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter lines rhyming a b, c b, as in:

Quatrain

"The sheriff dwelled in Nottingham
He was fain he was agone
And Robin and his merry men
Went to the wood anon."

This may be varied by making all the lines of equal length or by changing the rhyme scheme. A familiar variation is the *In Memoriam* stanza named from its use in Tennyson's poem. This is iambic tetrameter in all four verses rhyming a b, b a, for example:

"He is not here; but far away
The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day."

The quatrain is an easy and popular pattern susceptible of many variations. In narrative verse it has been found most natural. Many of our most loved American poems by Longfellow and Whittier are in this pattern.

Spenserian stanza

The *Spenserian stanza* is a nine-verse stanza, the first eight verses being iambic pentameter and the ninth verse hexameter. It rhymes a b, a b, b c, b c, c. It derives its name from Edmund Spenser, an Elizabethan poet who used it in his greatest poem, *The Faerie Queene.* It is the meter of Shelley's *Adonais*, of Byron's *Childe Harold*, and of Keats's *Eve of St. Agnes.* It is well adapted to beautiful variations of tone color and to elaborate imagery. Ideas can be effectively developed in this stanza where the added length of the final line gives an excellent opportunity for climax. Notice the effective climax in the last line of this Spenserian stanza from Byron's *Childe Harold:*

"There was a sound of revelry by night, a
And Belgium's capital had gathered then b
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright a
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men; b
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when b
Music arose with its voluptuous swell, c
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again, b
And all went merry as a marriage bell; c
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!" c

And notice the shifting music rising to a superb climax in the final stanza from *Adonais*, one of the most beautiful uses of this pattern in our language:

"The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are."

The *ottava rima* is a stanza pattern that was borrowed by Byron from the Italian. It is an eight-line iambic pentameter stanza rhyming a b, a b, a b, c c. It is the pattern of much of Byron's *Don Juan* and of Keats's *Isabella*. The following stanza from *Isabella* is ottava rima:

Ottava rima

"O Melancholy, linger here awhile! a
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly! b
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle, a
Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh! b
Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile; a
Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily, b
And make a pale light in your cypress glooms, c
Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs." c

The *sonnet* is a lyric form bound by rigorous rules. It is an isolated stanza used to develop a single idea or feeling; and it requires fourteen iambic pentameter lines. The Petrarchan sonnet, named from the Italian poet, Petrarch, is divided into two sections of six and eight lines, each section having a rhyme system of its own. The first section of eight lines is the *octave;* the second section of six lines is the *sestet.* In the Shakespearean sonnet, the fourteen lines fall into three quatrains and a concluding couplet.

The sonnet

The sonnet is a difficult pattern to use, since it must express a complete idea or feeling within the narrow limits of fourteen lines arranged in a specific verse form allowing slight deviation. Notice the rhyme schemes in the following sonnets, the first by Shakespeare, the second, a Petrarchan form, by Wordsworth.

1.

Quatrain	"When, in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes,	a
	I all alone beweep my outcast state,	b
	And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,	a
	And look upon myself, and curse my fate,	b
Quatrain	Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,	c
	Featured like him, like him with friends possesst,	d
	Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,	c
	With what I most enjoy contented least;	d
Quatrain	Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising—	e
	Haply I think on thee: and then my state,	f
	Like to the Lark at break of day arising	e
	From sullen earth, sings hymns at Heaven's gate;	f
Couplet	For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings	g
	That then I scorn to change my state with kings."	g

Shakespeare

2.

Octave	"The world is too much with us; late and soon,	a
	Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;	b
	Little we see in Nature that is ours;	b
	We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!	a
	This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;	a
	The winds that will be howling at all hours,	b
	And are upgather'd now, like sleeping flowers;	b
	For this, for everything, we are out of tune;	a
Sestet	It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be	c
	A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;	d
	So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,	c
	Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;	d
	Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;	c
	Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn."	d

Wordsworth

There has been a tendency on the part of modern poets to revolt from definite patterns. Strict metrical laws and definite rhyme schemes seem to them irksome, artificial, and unnecessary. They have, therefore, adapted the rhythm and rhyme schemes of their verses to the feeling of their poems without regard to definite stanza forms. In their revolt from conventional forms they call their poetry *free verse*. The patterns of free verse are not bound by set rules, but they are defined by recurrent rhythms and often by rhyme. No beauty can be entirely formless. The writers of free verse escape from the artificial restrictions of conventional patterns, but not from the laws of form and harmony. Free verse is often a beautiful medium for the expression of a poet's ideas and feelings, but it is not necessarily a more satisfactory medium than a definite stanza form. Amy Lowell's *Patterns* is an excellent example of a free verse form that is truly organic. The two following contemporary poems by Carl Sandburg show the use of "untrammeled" rhythm and illustrate the beauties and the limitations of the "new poetry."

Free verse

"PEARL HORIZONS

Under a prairie fog moon
in a circle of pearl mist horizons,
a few lonesome dogs scraping thongs,
midnight is lonely; the fog moon midnight
takes up again its even smooth November.

Memories: you can flick me and sting me.
Memories, you can hold me even and smooth.

A circle of pearl mist horizons
is not a woman to be walked up to and kissed,
nor a child to be taken and held for a good-night,
nor any old coffee-drinking pal to be smiled at in
the eyes and left with a grip and a handshake.

Pearl memories in the mist circling the horizon,
flick me, sting me, hold me even and smooth."

"SAND SCRIBBLINGS

The wind stops, the wind begins.
The wind says stop, begin.

A sea shovel scrapes the sand floor.
The shovel changes, the floor changes.

The sandpipers, maybe they know.
Maybe a three-pointed foot can tell.
Maybe the fog moon they fly to, guesses.

The sandpipers cheep 'Here' and get away.
Five of them fly and keep together flying.

Night hair of some sea woman
Curls on the sand when the sea leaves
The salt tide without a good-by.

Boxes on the beach are empty.
Shake 'em and the nails loosen.
They have been somewhere." [1]

[1] Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company.

It is a mistake, however, to think of free verse as an exclusive product of recent years. Poets have always broken away from conventional patterns whenever they have found a freer pattern more suited to their purposes. Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach*, for example, is almost as much free verse as Amy Lowell's *Patterns*.

The poet chooses a pattern which fits his subject matter. The sonnet is an excellent pattern in which to develop a single idea by first giving illustrations (in the octave) and then stating the idea directly (in the sestet). The Spenserian stanza is an excellent pattern in which to work up to a climax at the end of the stanza; it is also well adapted to elaborate ornamentation. The ottava rima has the advantage of being neither too long nor too short; it is also well adapted to musical expression. The quatrain is appropriate for any simple story or simple feeling that requires simple expression. The couplet gives an excellent opportunity for driving ideas home brilliantly so that they will linger in the mind; it also gives rapidity of movement. Blank verse is the best medium for the expression of profound or dignified feeling, or noble ideas. The pattern of a song should be spontaneously lyrical, with haunting refrains or lilting music.

The pattern and the subject matter

Tennyson's *Bugle Song* illustrates the blending in a perfect pattern of meter, rhymes, choice of words, and stanza form.

"The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!

O, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying."

The appropriateness of every detail of the pattern is here apparent. The echoes are wonderfully suggested in the internal rhymes, in the choice of vowel sounds, and in the lingering feminine endings of the refrain. The refrain itself is perfectly suggestive of answering echoes; it has just enough variation in each stanza to carry the thought and the music on from one stanza to another. Practically every device for securing tone color is used here: beautifully varied vowel sounds, liquid and sibilant consonants, rhymes exquisitely tuned to both feeling and sense. Many of Tennyson's poems are splendid illustrations of pattern of sound and color and feeling perfectly blended. *Sweet and Low* is an obvious example. *Maud* is a poem which he loved to read aloud, because in it music and form shift instinctively with the feeling.

A THREEFOLD DIVISION OF POETRY

The various subject matter of poetry can be brought under three general headings: the poetry of reflection, the poetry of incident, and the poetry of feeling. All poetry that primarily seeks to teach a lesson or to impress an idea on the reader is *poetry of reflection.* All poetry that seeks primarily to tell a story is *poetry of incident.* All poetry that seeks primarily to express the feeling of the poet or of the

person he imagines himself to represent, is *poetry of feeling*. This threefold classification avoids the artificial limitations of particular types and permits the discussion of subject matter and form of any poem under a given heading. These three classifications may, of course, with perfect propriety meet in a single poem, if that poem does all three of these things. *The Ancient Mariner* is such a poem.

EXERCISES

Exercise 1

THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE

The old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
  The ringers rang by two, by three;
"Pull, if ye never pulled before;
  Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
  "Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells!
Play all your changes, all your swells,
  Play uppe 'The Brides of Enderby.' "
. . . . . .

I sat and spun within the doore,
  My thread brake off, I raised myne eyes;
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
  Lay sinking in the barren skies;
And dark against day's golden death
She moved where Lindis wandereth,
My sonne's faire wife, Elizabeth.

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
  Ere the early dews were falling,
Farre away I heard her song.
    "Cusha! Cusha!" all along;
Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
      Floweth, floweth,
From the meads where melick groweth
  Faintly came her milking song—

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
For the dews will soone be falling;
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe Whitefoot, come uppe Lightfoot,
Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow;
Come uppe Jetty, rise and follow,
From the clovers lift your head;
Come uppe Whitefoot, come uppe Lightfoot,
Come uppe Jetty, rise and follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

If it be long, aye, long ago,
When I beginne to think howe long,
Againe I hear the Lindis flow,
Swift as an arrowe, sharpe and strong;
And all the aire it seemeth mee
Bin full of floating bells (sayth shee),
That ring the tune of Enderby.

. . . . . .

I looked without, and lo! my sonne
Came riding downe with might and main:
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
"Elizabeth! Elizabeth!"
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.)

"The olde sea wall (he cried) is downe,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder towne
Go sailing uppe the market-place."
He shook as one that looks on death:
"God save you, mother!" straight he saith;
"Where is my wife, Elizabeth?"

"Good sonne, where Lindis winds away
With her two bairns I marked her long;

And ere yon bells beganne to play
  Afar I heard her milking song."
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left, "Ho Enderby!"
They rang "The Brides of Enderby!"

With that he cried and beat his breast;
  For lo! along the river's bed
A mighty eygre reared his crest,
  And uppe the Lindis raging sped.
It sped with thunderous voices loud;
Shaped like a curling snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.

. . . . . .

So farre, so fast the eygre drave,
  The heart had hardly time to beat,
Before a shallow seething wave
  Sobbed in the grasses at oure feet:
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.

Upon the roofe we sate that night,
  The noise of bells went sweeping by:
I marked the lofty beacon light
  Stream from the church tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to see;
And awesome bells they were to mee,
That in the dark rang "Enderby."

They rang the sailor lads to guide
  From roofe to roofe who fearless rowed;
And I—my sonne was at my side,
  And yet the ruddy beacon glowed;
And yet he moaned beneath his breath,
"O come in life, or come in death!
O lost! my love, Elizabeth."

And didst thou visit him no more?
  Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter deare;

The waters laid thee at his doore,
  Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Downe drifted to thy dwelling place.

That flow strewed wrecks about the grass,
  That ebbe swept out the flocks to sea;
A fatal ebbe and flow, alas!
  To manye more than myne and me:
But each will mourn his own (she saith).
And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.

I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews be falling;
I shall never hear her song,
"Cusha, Cusha!" all along,
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
    Goeth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth,
When the water winding down,
Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
    Shiver, quiver;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling,
To the sandy lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,
"Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
    Mellow, mellow;

Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
  Come uppe Whitefoot, come uppe Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
    Hollow, hollow;

Come uppe Lightfoot, rise and follow;
Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From your clovers lift the head;
Come uppe Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

Jean Ingelow

Analyze the poem according to this outline:

I. Emotional appeal, its justice, continuity, depth, and range; how it is secured:
   a. By pictures
   b. By sound
   c. By words

II. Figures of speech
   a. Number, frequency, range
   b. Appropriateness, *i. e.* suggestive value
   c. What they add of beauty, force, truth, or clearness

III. Sound
   a. Relation to feeling
   b. Onomatopœia: how secured
   c. Tone color: how secured

IV. Symbols and images

V. Thought: how suggested

VI. Meter and pattern
   a. Technique
   b. Appropriateness
   c. Variations

VII. The kinds of poetry represented

VIII. Make a similar study of:
   a. *The Ancient Mariner*, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge
   b. *The Highwayman*, or *The Flower of Old Japan*, by Alfred Noyes
   c. *Lancelot*, by Edwin Arlington Robinson
   d. *North of Boston*, by Robert Frost
   e. *1777*, by Amy Lowell
   f. *The Spoon River Anthology*, by Edgar Lee Masters
   g. *The Everlasting Mercy*, by John Masefield

Exercise 2

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
  And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
  Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
  She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
  And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
  In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning
  And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,
  It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
  The vasty hall of death.

Matthew Arnold

Consider carefully the emotional element in this poem. To what feelings does it appeal? Does it appeal to more than one emotion? Is that emotion universal? Sincere? Justified? How can you tell whether or not it is sincere and justified? Is it sustained throughout? Is the poem effective because of restraint or because of unrestrained vehemence of expression? How is its mood created? Are the symbols and images used to express an idea or a feeling? What is the pattern of the poem? In what ways is it an appropriate pattern? Do you think that there is any advantage gained by using both masculine and feminine endings in each stanza? What instances are there of feeling secured through sound? Are there any phrases remarkable for poetic suggestion? What figures of speech do you find? Are there any that appeal to you? Are there expressions that you do not understand? Is there any line that seems to you truly great for its power of suggestion? What two poems quoted in Chapter III does this resemble? Which of the three do you think is the greatest? Why? Bring to class a poem which you yourself have found and answer these questions about it.

Exercise 3

Find what seem to you the best nature pictures in any of the *Idylls of the King*. Which are of trees and flowers? Which of moonlight? birds? water? Quote the best picture of the ocean and the seashore in the *Idylls*. Which ones remind you of scenes you have observed at some time? or of pictures you have seen? Which are painted in detail? Which are suggested in a few words? Do any of them help to create mood? Which are richest in color and outline—like a painting? Which suggest sound? In what aspect of nature do you think Tennyson was most interested? Which of the pictures reveal him as a close and accurate observer of detail in nature? For how many different purposes does he use pictures? Are any of them tableaux? What are the best ones of people? Which best give the scene of an action? Are the pictures of people valuable for suggesting character and personality or appearance?

Exercise 4

In any collection of poems find pictures that could serve as images of a clearly defined mood, such as *peace*, *gloom*, *happiness*, or *weariness*. Find pictures that appeal to you either because of their familiarity or because of their strangeness. Find pictures suggested in a few words and some painted in detail. Write a description of the scene suggested to you by the pictures in some poem: be sure that your description creates a central mood. Individual modern poems and collections which may be effectively studied in this way are:

a. *When the Frost is on the Punkin*, by James Whitcomb Riley

b. *Lincoln, the Man of the People*, by Edwin Markham

c. *A Vagabond Song* and *Daisies*, by Bliss Carman

d. *The Flower of Old Japan*, *The Highwayman*, *The Forest of Wild Thyme*, by Alfred Noyes

e. *Solitaire*, *Meeting House Hill*, *Madonna of the Evening Flowers*, *Patterns*, *The Trumpet Vine Arbor*, *The City of Falling Leaves*, *A Lady*, *Red Slippers*, *Chinoiseries*, by Amy Lowell

f. *The Chinese Nightingale*, by Vachel Lindsay

g. *Salt Water Ballads*, *Reynard the Fox*, *The Daffodil Fields*, by John Masefield

h. *Spoon River Anthology*, by Edgar Lee Masters

i. *North of Boston*, *Mountain Interval*, *New Hampshire*, by Robert Frost

j. *Coming to Port, Hours, At the Aquarium,* by Max Eastman
k. *Swimmers, A Side Street,* by Louis Untermeyer
l. *Renascence,* by Edna St. Vincent Millay
m. *Arizona Poems,* by John Gould Fletcher
n. *Peacock Pie,* by Walter de la Mare
o. *The Harbor, Lost, The Poor, Under the Harvest Moon,* by Carl Sandburg.
p. *The Horse Thief, Merchants from Cathay,* by William Rose Benét.
q. *The Sea-Gipsy,* by Richard Hovey.
r. *A Faun in Wall Street,* by John O'Hara.

Exercise 5

In each of the following passages pick out the words and phrases which have the power of suggestion. What do they suggest: color? sound? mood? odor? touch? taste? feeling? heat? cold? fear? softness? hardness? Have any of the proper names connotative value? Be specific in your discussion.

a. While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

Keats

b. These delicates he heap'd with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retirèd quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.

Keats

c. The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam.

Keats

d. Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness.

e. The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide.

f. Death like a friend's voice from a distant field
Approaching through the darkness call'd; the owls
Wailing had power upon her, and she mix't
Her fancies with the sallow rifted glooms of evening
And the moanings of the wind.

g. the wan day
Went glooming down in wet and weariness.
Tennyson

h. Silver sails all out of the west.
Tennyson

i. Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes.
Shakespeare

j. How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank.
Shakespeare

k. Alone, alone, all, all, alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
Coleridge

l. The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free,
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.
Coleridge

m. There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.
Coleridge

n. Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon and eve's one star,
Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair;
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,

Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest. *Keats*

o.

Coldly, sadly descends
The autumn-evening. The field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,
Fade into dimness apace,
Silent;—hardly a shout
From a few boys late at their play!
The lights come out in the street,
In the school-room windows;—but cold,
Solemn, unlighted, austere,
Through the gathering darkness, arise
The chapel-walls. *Arnold*

p.

at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom,
And the high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hillside—
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The Kings of the sea!" *Arnold*

q.

The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the deep
Moans round with many voices. *Tennyson*

r.

O mother Ida, many fountain'd Ida
Dear Mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill;
The grasshopper is silent in the grass;
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
The purple flower droops, the golden bee
Is lily-cradled.

Tennyson

s.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced forever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry waves.
You seem'd to hear them climb and fall
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing caves,
Beneath the windy wall.

Tennyson

t.

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Browning

Apply this exercise to the following poems by contemporary writers:

1. *The Horse Thief*, by William Rose Benét
2. *One City Only, The Pool*, by Alice Corbin
3. *The Listeners*, by Walter de la Mare

4. *Arizona Poems*, by John Gould Fletcher
5. *Birches, Blueberries, The Onset*, by Robert Frost
6. *The Trumpet Vine Arbor, The City of Falling Leaves, Solitaire, Red Slippers, Madonna of the Evening Flowers, A Winter Ride, July Midnight, The Dusty Hour Glass, Patterns*, by Amy Lowell
7. *Tewkesbury Road, Ships, Cargoes, Sea Fever*, by John Masefield
8. *Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard, Lost, The Poor, Sketch, The Harbor, At a Window*, by Carl Sandburg
9. *Chimes*, by Alice Meynell
10. *The Congo*, by Vachel Lindsay

Exercise 6

Here are similes and metaphors for study. Some are better than others. See if you can discover which of them fail to suggest what the author intended them to. Do any convey a mixture of suggestions? Are any of them beautiful in themselves but inappropriate as comparisons? As you study each one, ask yourself the following questions: What are the things compared? Are they like or unlike? Are they alike in more than one respect? Are they commonplace? Are they too dissimilar? Do they seem to be straining for effect? What is the poetic suggestion of the comparison? Does the figure add clearness, force, beauty, or mood to the passage?

a. To suggest bitterness in a man's heart:

> But ever after, the small violence done
> Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,
> As the sharp wind that ruffles all day long
> A little bitter pool about a stone
> On the bare coast.

b. To suggest quiet in the midst of sound:

> Quiet as any water-sodden log
> Stay'd in the wandering warble of a brook.

c. To suggest a drunken knight's fall from his horse:

> Down from the causeway heavily to the swamp
> Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching wave,
> Heard in dead night along that table-shore,

Drops flat, and after the great waters break
Whitening for half a league, and thin themselves,
Far over sands marbled with moon and cloud,
From less and less to nothing.

d. To suggest the lonely wail of a ghost's cry at night:

And fainter onward, like wild birds that change
Their season in the night and wail their way
From cloud to cloud, down the long wind the dream
Shrill'd; but in going mingled with dim cries
Far in the moonlight haze among the hills,
As of some city sack'd by night,
When all is lost, and wife and child with wail
Pass to new lords.

e. To suggest beauty, dignity, and spiritual light in a man:

His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a brow
Like hill-snow high in heaven, the steel-blue eyes,
The golden beard that clothed his lips with light.

f. To suggest modesty in a girl:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

g. To suggest fear and indecision:

aghast the maiden rose
White as her veil, and stood before the Queen
As tremulously as foam upon the beach
Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly.

h. To suggest sudden joy:

Haply I think on thee: and then my state,
Like to the Lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at Heaven's gate.

i. To suggest an unpleasant smile:

Thereat the lady stretch'd a vulture throat,
And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile.

j. To suggest the incalculable power of an idea let loose among men:

Hark! The rushing snow!
The sun-awakened avalanche! whose mass,
Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered there
Flake after flake, in heaven-defying minds
As thought by thought is piled, till some great truth
Is loosened, and the nations echo round,
Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains now.

k. To suggest the relentless power of thought:

And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

l. To suggest the mystery, beauty, and fragility of life:

Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.

m. To suggest vague longing:

The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From this sphere of our sorrow.

n. To suggest eternal separation from what one loves:

Who renders vain their deep desire?
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd salt, estranging sea.

o. To suggest the growth of love:

So day by day it grew, as if one should
Slip slowly down some path worn smooth and even
Down to a cool sea on a summer day.

p. To suggest dawn:

Like a lobster boiled, the morn
From black to red began to burn.

q. To suggest the peace and quiet of a home at twilight:

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold up their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

r. To describe gentle and tender melancholy:

A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

s. To describe a ship becalmed:

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

t. To suggest the pain and bitterness of estrangement from friends:

They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between;—
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

u. To suggest richness of beauty in a woman:

Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

v. To suggest the hot sun in a tropical sky:

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun at noon
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

w. To suggest a pleasant, soft, cool sound:

A noise like that of hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

x. Make a similar list of your own from any good anthology of modern verse, for instance those by Mrs. Waldo Richards, Louis Untermeyer, Anita Forbes, or Jessie Rittenhouse.

Exercise 7

Here are various figures of speech. Identify each and comment on its poetic value. Is it striking? forceful? beautiful? illuminating? appropriate? moving? What is its poetic suggestion?

a.

Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. *Shakespeare*

b.

about his feet
A voice clung sobbing till he question'd it,
"What art thou?" and the voice about his feet
Sent up an answer, sobbing, "I am thy fool,
And I shall never make thee smile again."
Tennyson

c.

I will kill thee a hundred and fifty ways.
Shakespeare

d.

Arthur with a hundred spears
Rode far. *Tennyson*

e.

For mockery is the fume of little hearts.
Tennyson

f.

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night. *Blake*

g.

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
. . . . . .
My dust would hear her and beat
Had I lain for a century dead,
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.
Tennyson

h. In various talk th' instructive hours they passt,
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
And one describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At ev'ry word a reputation dies.

Pope

i. The hungry Judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine.

Pope

j. Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

Pope

k. Here comes the lady. O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint.

Shakespeare

l. Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides!

Milton

m. Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber,
Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies
Which busy Care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou sleepst so sound.

Shakespeare

n. Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom
Lead thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead thou me on.
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Newman

o. Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Lucerne;
Weep, weep and rend your hair for those who never shall return.

. . . . . .

Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright;
Ho! burghers of St. Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night!

Macaulay

p. O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes!

Shelley

q. No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet.

Byron

r. And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

Byron

s. What is an epigram? a dwarfish whole,
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.

Coleridge

t. "Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?"
"When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

Scott

u. Here lies our Sovereign Lord, the King,
Whose word no man relies on,
Who never said a foolish thing,
Nor never did a wise one.

Wilmot

v. Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot.

Shakespeare

w. Down swept the chill wind from the mountain peak
From the snow five thousand summers old.

Lowell

x. Now lap dogs give themselves the rousing shake
And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake.

Pope

y. Her hair was tawny with gold; her eyes with purple were dark;
Her cheeks' pale opal burnt with a red and restless spark.

E. B. Browning

z. Ah, happy, happy boughs, that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu!
And happy melodist, unwearièd
Forever piping songs forever new.

Keats

Make a similar list of the figures of speech you encounter in any anthology of modern verse. You will find a list of good anthologies at the end of these exercises on poetry.

Exercise 8

Read each of the following aloud. What is the feeling created by each one? Explain in detail how a large part of that feeling is created by sound. Is the feeling in any case due to some other element? Is the feeling universal or limited? Is it deep or light? Does it seem to you justified? Sincere?

a. Here, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

Swinburne

b. In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall again did seem.

Tennyson

c.

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more;
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.

Shakespeare

d.

'Twas brillig and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe
All mimsey were the borogoves
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll

e.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide;
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside.

Coleridge

f.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company!
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

Wordsworth

g. Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are,
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre.

Macaulay

h.

You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.

Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
  Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
  Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.

Browning

i.

And at evening evermore
In a chapel by the shore,
When the chaunters, sad and saintly,
Yellow tapers burning faintly
Doleful masses chaunt for thee,
Miserere, Domine!
Hark! the cadence dies away
On the quiet moonlight sea;
The boatmen rest their oars and say,
Misere, Domine.

Coleridge

j. Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea,
And Willy's voice in the wind, "Oh mother, come out to me!"

Tennyson

k.

So we'll go no more a-roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving
And the moon be still as bright.

Byron

l. Apply this same test, reading aloud, to the following contemporary poems:

1. *The Highwayman, The Barrel-Organ,* by Alfred Noyes
2. *The City of Falling Leaves, Patterns,* by Amy Lowell
3. *The Horse Thief,* by William Rose Benét
4. *Tewkesbury Road, Reynard the Fox,* by John Masefield
5. *The Congo, The Santa Fe Trail, The Chinese Nightingale,* by Vachel Lindsay
6. *Tartary,* by Walter de la Mare

7. *Boots*, by Rudyard Kipling
8. *The Wild Ride, Irish Peasant Song*, by Louise Imogen Guiney
9. *Da Leetla Boy, Mia Carlotta, Between Two Loves*, by T. A. Daly
10. *The Turning of the Babies in the Bed, A Coquette Conquered, Discovered*, by Paul Laurence Dunbar
11. *Grey Rocks and Greyer Sea*, by Charles G. D. Roberts
12. *Daisies*, by Bliss Carman
13. *"Grandmither, Think not that I Forget,"* by Willa Cather

Exercise 9

Here are examples of onomatopœia. Read each aloud to see what the poet is attempting to suggest. Is the onomatopœia in each passage imitative or merely suggestive? Is it secured by meter or by sound regardless of meter? What letters and sounds in each passage are most suggestive?

a.

As I ride, as I ride,
To our Chief and his Allied,
Who dares chide my heart's pride
As I ride, as I ride?
. . . . . .
Do I glide unespied
As I ride, as I ride?

Browning

b.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.

Tennyson

c.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
Skimming down to Camelot.

Tennyson

d. I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

Tennyson

e. And all around I heard you pass
Like ladies' skirts across the grass.

Stevenson

f. From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers.

Arnold

g. Down, down, down;
Down to the depths of the sea!

Arnold

h. When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.

Arnold

i. While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.

Poe

Exercise 10

The night has a thousand eyes,
The day but one;
Yet the light of a bright world dies
With the dying sun.
The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Bourdillon

What are the symbols and images here? What comparisons do they suggest? What ideas do they suggest?

Exercise 11

a. Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
Live with the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Shelley

By means of images this poem suggests the value of all beautiful things. Each image suggests a special kind of appeal to one's sense of the beautiful—beauty of sound, of odor, of touch, of sight, of thought. What are the images here? What truth do they suggest?

b. Over the shoulders and slopes of the dune
I saw the white daisies go down to the sea,
A host in the sunshine, an army in June,
The people God sends us to set our hearts free.

The bobolinks rallied them up from the dell,
The orioles whistled them out of the wood;
And all of their singing was, "Earth, it is well!"
And all of their dancing was, "Life, thou art good!" [1]

Bliss Carman

Do the pictures here suggest a mood or an idea or both? If both, are the two separate or essential each to each? Has the sound anything to do with the mood or the idea? Would it have been possible to express the same idea as well by different pictures or different moods? Is the poem, as a philosophy of life, the result of a special mood felt on a special occasion, or could it be always true? Compare and contrast it with Louis Untermeyer's poem *Mockery*.

Exercise 12

Find the symbols and images in the following poems, and in a similar way discuss their value and their significance:

1. Emerson: *The Rhodora*
2. Holmes: *The Chambered Nautilus*
3. Joaquin Miller: *Crossing the Plains*
4. Christina Rossetti: *Consider*
5. Thackeray: *The End of the Play*
6. Keats: *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*
7. Bryant: *To a Waterfowl*

[1] *Daisies*, by Bliss Carman; reprinted by permission of and by arrangement with Small, Maynard and Company.

8. Herrick: *To Daffodils*
9. Joyce Kilmer: *Trees*
10. Charles Kingsley: *Clear and Cool*
11. Edith Thomas: *Frost To-night*
12. Edwin Markham: *Lincoln, the Man of the People; The Man with the Hoe*
13. John Masefield: *Cargoes*
14. John Drinkwater: *Symbols*
15. Rupert Brooke: *The Great Lover*
16. Richard Burton: *Black Sheep*
17. Robert Frost: *Mending Wall, Birches, The Onset*
18. Carl Sandburg: *Cool Tombs, Clean Curtains, Grass*
19. Sara Teasdale: *The Long Hill, Water Lilies*
20. Emily Dickinson: *Suspense, Indian Summer, A Cemetery*
21. William Rose Benét: *The Falconer of God*
22. Willa Cather: *The Palatine*
23. Walter de la Mare: *The Listeners*
24. Thomas Hardy: *She Hears the Storm*
25. Amy Lowell: *Patterns*
26. William Vaughn Moody: *Gloucester Moors*
27. Charles G. D. Roberts: *Grey Rocks and Greyer Sea, The Recessional*
28. Bliss Carman: *A Vagabond Song*
29. Theodosia Garrison: *Stains*
30. Sarah P. M. Greene: *De Massa ob de Sheepfol'*
31. Katharine Tynan: *Sheep and Lambs*
32. Robert C. Rogers: *The Rosary*
33. Anna Hempstead Branch: *Songs for my Mother*
34. George Sylvester Viereck: *The Buried City*

Exercise 13

THE SOLITARY REAPER

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago;
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

Wordsworth

Read again in the chapter on poetry the paragraphs which tell how the poet's imagination helps him to see the spiritual significance of his experiences. Show how in this poem each stanza treats the subject from a different point of view. Which stanza recreates imaginatively an incident and a picture? Which stanza associates pictures and ideas so that we can better understand how the incident impressed the poet? Which stanzas suggest the underlying value of the whole incident? In what ways does this poem illustrate the workings of the poet's imagination? (See the section on Thought in Poetry.)

Exercise 14

Summarize as briefly as possible the ideas suggested by the following poems. State briefly whether or not you think these ideas

true. How are they suggested by the poet? Does the medium of suggestion (symbol, image, pattern, etc.) seem to you appropriate?

1. Herrick: *Gather ye rosebuds while ye may*
2. Elizabeth Barrett Browning: *A Musical Instrument*
3. Clough: *Say not the struggle naught availeth*
4. Coventry Patmore: *The Spirit's Epochs*
5. Christina Rossetti: *Up-hill*
6. Stevenson: *Requiem*
7. Byron: *There's not a joy the world can give*
8. Sill: *Opportunity*
9. Gray: *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*
10. Adelaide Procter: *One by One*
11. Matthew Arnold: *Self-Dependence*
12. Robert Browning: *Prospice*
13. Thomas S. Jones, Jr.: *Sometimes*
14. Alice Meynell: *Maternity*
15. Edgar Lee Masters: *Father Malloy, Lucinda Matlock, Anne Rutledge, Rutherford McDowell, Arlo Will, Webster Ford, Doc Hill, Hare Drummer*
16. John Masefield: *What Am I, Life?*
17. Katharine Tynan: *Sheep and Lambs*
18. Sara Teasdale: *Water Lilies, The Long Hill*
19. William Rose Benét: *The Falconer of God*
20. William Vaughn Moody: *Gloucester Moors*
21. Carl Sandburg: *Chicago, At a Window, The Poor, The Road and the End, Killers, Choose, Kin, Joy, The Great Hunt, Our Prayer of Thanks*
22. Francis Thompson: *The Hound of Heaven*
23. Theodosia Garrison: *Stains, The Tears of Harlequin*
24. Lizette Woodworth Reese: *Tears*
25. Louis Untermeyer: *Mockery*
26. Siegfried Sassoon: *Does It Matter?*

Exercise 15

Scan the following passages and give the proper metrical name to each line. Note variations and state what is gained by them.

a. Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;

And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.
Byron

b.
Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed
Or to victorie. *Burns*

c.
Stars of the summer night!
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light,
She sleeps
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps! *Longfellow*

d. And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before.
Poe

e.
Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Shakespeare

f.
Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep. *Blake*

g.
Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes
In looking on the happy autumn-fields
And thinking of the days that are no more.
Tennyson

h.
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly
Young and so fair! *Hood*

i. We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Shelley

Exercise 16

Give the metrical name of each line in the following stanzas. Give the rhyme scheme of each stanza. Which are masculine, which feminine rhymes? Indicate end-stopped and run-on lines and cesuras. What is the name of the stanza pattern of each?

a.

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low "Thou must,"
The Youth replies, "I can."

Emerson

b.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost line back with tropic heat.

Whittier

c.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

Tennyson

d.

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense:
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar:
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line, too, labours, and the words move slow.

Pope

e. Trochee trips from long to short;
From long to long in solemn sort
Slow Spondee stalks; strong foot! yet ill able
Ever to come up with Dactyl trisyllable;
Iambics march from short to long;
With a leap and a bound the swift Anapests throng;
One syllable long with a short at each side
Amphibrachys hastes with a stately stride;
First and last being long, middle short, Amphimacer
Strikes his thundering hoofs, like a proud high bred racer.

Coleridge

f. O for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild-flowers' time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood.

Whittier

g. I will paint her as I see her:
Ten times have the lilies blown,
Since she looked upon the sun.

And her face is lily-clear—
Lily-shaped, and drooped in duty
To the law of its own beauty.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

h. Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells.
And students with their pensive citadels;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest peak of Furness fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
In truth the prison unto which we doom
Ourselves no prison is: and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;

Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.
Wordsworth

i. And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,
And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
And the new morn she saw not: but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core. *Keats*

j. A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint devise,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.
Keats

k. Ah, cool night-wind, tremulous stars!
Ah, glimmering water,
Fitful earth-murmur,
Dreaming woods!
Ah, golden-hair'd, strangely smiling Goddess,
And thou, proved, much enduring,
Wave-toss'd Wanderer!
Who can stand still?
Ye fade, ye swim, ye waver before me—
The cup again!

Faster, faster,
O Circe, Goddess,
Let the wild, thronging train,
The bright procession
Of eddying forms,
Sweep through my soul! *Matthew Arnold*

Exercise 17

Analyze the tone color of one of the following poems. Look especially for such devices as alliteration, deep-toned and open vowels, liquid and sibilant consonants, end-stopped and run-on lines, cesuras, effectively varied rhythms, haunting refrains, musical shifts in the meter:

1. Shelley: *To a Skylark, The Cloud, The Indian Serenade, To Night*
2. Keats: *La Belle Dame Sans Merci, Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode to Autumn*
3. Rossetti: *The Blessed Damosel*
4. Tennyson: Songs from *The Princess, The Passing of Arthur*
5. Arnold: *The Forsaken Merman*
6. Swinburne: *The Garden of Proserpine*
7. Poe: *The Bells, Ulalume, The Raven*
8. Andrew Lang: *Scythe Song*
9. Kipling: *The Road to Mandalay*
10. Bliss Carman and Richard Hovey: *Songs from Vagabondia*
11. Alfred Noyes: *The Flower of Old Japan*
12. John Masefield: *Reynard the Fox, Enslaved, Salt Water Ballads*
13. Amy Lowell: *The City of Falling Leaves*
14. Robert Frost: *The Death of the Hired Man, Home Burial, The Home Stretch*
15. Edwin Arlington Robinson: *Lancelot*
16. Vachel Lindsay: *The Congo, The Chinese Nightingale, The Santa Fe Trail*
17. Edgar Lee Masters: *Spoon River Anthology*
18. Louise Imogen Guiney: *Tryste Noël*
19. Frederic L. Knowles: *On a Fly-Leaf of Burns' Songs*

Exercise 18

What is the mood of each of the following poems? Is it a mood common to most people or to only a few? Is it a deep mood? Does it seem to you justified? sincere? Is it kept up throughout the poem? Have you felt it yourself? Is it unknown to you? Have you read other poems which express the same mood? Do they express it better? not so well? Explain.

1. Bliss Carman: *Lord of My Heart's Elation*

2. Richard Hovey: *The Sea Gipsy, A Stein Song*
3. John Masefield: *Sea Fever*
4. Louis Untermeyer: *Mockery*
5. Theresa Helburn: *Mother*
6. Frank Dempster Sherman: *Witchery*
7. Charles G. D. Roberts: *Grey Rocks and Greyer Sea*
8. Willa Cather: *"Grandmither, Think not that I Forget"*
9. Grace Fallow Norton: *Little Gray Songs from St. Joseph's*
10. Louise Imogen Guiney: *Irish Peasant Song, The Wild Ride*
11. Josephine Preston Peabody: *The House and the Road*
12. Edna St. Vincent Millay: *Renascence*
13. Robert Haven Schauffler: *Scum o' the Earth*
14. Richard Burton: *The Song of the Unsuccessful*
15. Alfred Noyes: *The Barrel-Organ*
16. Robert Frost: *Birches*
17. William Rose Benét: *The Horse-Thief*
18. Katharine Tynan: *Sheep and Lambs*
19. Rupert Brooke: *The Soldier*
20. Winifred M. Letts: *The Spires of Oxford*
21. Alan Seeger: *I Have a Rendezvous with Death*
22. Siegfried Sassoon: *Does It Matter?*
23. John Kendrick Bangs: *My Dog*
24. Walter de la Mare: *The Sunken Garden*
25. Amy Lowell: *The Garden by Moonlight, Madonna of the Evening Flowers*
26. Rudyard Kipling: *Recessional*
27. Louis Untermeyer: *Prayer*
28. Eugene Field: *Little Boy Blue, Seein' Things*
29. Edwin Arlington Robinson: *Miniver Cheevy*
30. Edgar Lee Masters: *Lucinda Matlock, Anne Rutledge, Father Malloy*
31. Carl Sandburg: *Cool Tombs, At a Window*
32. Sara Teasdale: *The Long Hill*

These poems may be found distributed among three anthologies:

a. *The Little Book of Modern Verse*, by Jessie Rittenhouse.
b. *Modern Verse*, by Anita Forbes.
c. *Modern American Poetry*, by Louis Untermeyer.

Exercise 19

How is concreteness given to abstract ideas or feelings in the following poems?

1. Ben Jonson: *So Sweet is She*
2. Robert Herrick: *To Daffodils*
3. William Shakespeare: *That Time of the Year Thou Mayst in Me Behold*
4. William Wordsworth: *She Dwelt Among Untrodden Ways*
5. John Keats: *Ode on a Grecian Urn*
6. Tennyson: *Tears, Idle Tears*
7. Robert Browning: *Love Among the Ruins*
8. Elizabeth Barrett Browning: *A Musical Instrument*
9. Oliver Wendell Holmes: *The Chambered Nautilus*
10. James Russell Lowell: *The Vision of Sir Launfal*
11. John Masefield: *Sea Fever, Cargoes*
12. Oliver Herford: *Earth*
13. George Sylvester Viereck: *The Buried City*
14. Josephine Preston Peabody: *The House and the Road*

Exercise 20

Paraphrase the following poems in such a way as to trace the progress of the thought from stanza to stanza or from line to line. Where do the divisions or transitions in the thought come? Are the ideas directly expressed or merely suggested? Are they brought home by images, symbols, allegory, or stories? Are any of these poems sonnets? If so, how are the divisions of the sonnet related to its thought?

1. Shakespeare: *Poor Soul, the Centre of My Sinful Earth, When in Disgrace with Fortune and Men's Eyes*
2. Milton: *On His Blindness, Lycidas*
3. Blake: *Tiger, Tiger*
4. Burns: *A Man's a Man*
5. Goldsmith: *The Deserted Village*
6. Gray: *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*
7. Wordsworth: *Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, Ode on Intimations of Immortality*
8. Shelley: *Adonais, To a Skylark*
9. Keats: *Ode on a Grecian Urn, On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*
10. Tennyson: *Ulysses*

11. Robert Browning: *Rabbi Ben Ezra, A Grammarian's Funeral, The Statue and the Bust, Saul*
12. Arnold: *Self-Dependence*
13. Kipling: *Recessional, If*
14. William Vaughn Moody: *Gloucester Moors*
15. John Masefield: *Cargoes*
16. Louis Untermeyer: *Mockery*
17. Richard Burton: *Black Sheep*
18. Joyce Kilmer: *Martin*
19. George Santayana: *As in the Midst of Battle There Is Room*

Exercise 21

The following exercises help in the study of anthologies. Some excellent anthologies are:

The Golden Treasury: Palgrave
Golden Numbers: Wiggin and Smith
British Verse for Boys: Thompson
The Chief American Poets: Page
British Poets of the Nineteenth Century: Page
The Oxford Book of English Verse: Quiller-Couch
High Tide; The Melody of Earth; Star Points: Richards
The Little Book of Modern Verse: Rittenhouse
The Second Book of Modern Verse: Rittenhouse
New Voices: Wilkinson
The New Poetry: Monroe and Henderson
Modern American and British Poetry: Untermeyer
Modern Verse: Anita Forbes

a. Select a poem (not too long) that you like for at least two reasons; then commit it to memory. State your reasons for selecting it.
b. Find one poem that seems to you to offer a good example of imaginative characteristics; one that illustrates the rhythmic quality of poetry; and one that illustrates the feeling for beauty.
c. Select one poem that appeals to your imagination because of its familiarity and one that appeals to you because of its strangeness.
d. Select a poem that secures its emotional appeal through:
    1. Pictures
    2. Rhythm
    3. The poetic connotation of its diction
    4. Tone color

e. Find examples of close relationship between *rhythm* or *sound* and *feeling.* Explain.

f. Find an example of a poem that uses an *image* to express a mood or an idea.

g. 1. Find three nature pictures that appeal to you.
2. Find a detailed word painting.
3. Find a picture created through poetic suggestion.

h. Find a poem that secures its effect through suggestion rather than through direct statement, that is, one that suggests more than it says.

i. Quote twelve passages illustrating the power of poetic suggestion.

j. Find two similes that are:
1. good because of the similarity of the things compared.
2. good because of their connotation.
3. too strained or too commonplace or too unlike.

k. 1. Find three metaphors that seem to you good.
2. Find two examples of effective personification.
3. Find two examples of onomatopœia.
4. Find two examples of metonymy. (Define)
5 Find two examples of symbols. (Explain)

l. Find examples of tone color secured by:
1. alliteration
2. rhyme
3. use of both masculine and feminine rhymes
4. end-stopped and run-on lines
5. deep-toned vowels
6. soft consonants, or liquid and sibilant consonants

m. Find a poem with a thought expressed through:
1. similes or metaphors
2. symbols
3. images
4. allegory
5. the sonnet form

n. Find one poem the thought of which strikes you as either true or interesting, or both, and state that thought in your own words.

o. Find a poem the inspiration of which is in:
1. nature
2. personality (character)

3. human relationships
4. universal human experience
5. the commonplace in man or nature
6. literature
7. music
8. painting
9. human history
10. God or religion

p. Find a poem that is helped by simplicity of pattern and of language.

q. Find a poem that uses a complicated pattern.

r. Find a sonnet. Give its metrical name and its rhyme scheme.

s. Find a poem in blank verse. Give its metrical name. Find an irregular verse in it. Find an end-stopped line; a run-on line.

t. Find a poem written in quatrains. Give the metrical name of its verses and its rhyme scheme.

u. Find a poem written in rhymed couplets.

v. Find an effective use of refrain—one that has a haunting effect on the melody and on the emotional appeal.

w. Find a poem that varies its meter for a purpose and state what is gained by the variation.

x. Find a pattern that seems to you free from any definite rhyme scheme or metrical plan.

y. Find a line with the prevailing foot iambic; trochaic; anapestic; dactylic.

z. Find examples of:

1. spondees
2. omitted syllables
3. unaccented syllables added at the end of a verse.

CHAPTER IV

PROSE FICTION

WHAT PROSE FICTION IS

Prose fiction is just another name for all stories in prose about imaginary happenings to imaginary people. Sometimes some of these characters and events are true to fact, but in the main a work of fiction is the creation of the imagination. It is true in various ways, but it is not a record of actual happenings to real people.

What prose fiction is

Almost everyone reads fiction. The most obvious reason is that everyone likes a story. We begin to be interested in the adventures of imaginary characters almost as soon as we are capable of understanding spoken language; we demand again and again the adventures of Miss Muffet and the Spider and of the House that Jack Built.

What are the reasons for the fascination that these imaginary people and events have for us? In the first place, we read stories for entertainment—to while away an idle hour. Thus we read light fiction on a railway journey or when we are convalescing from an illness. Many books exist for just this temporary entertainment. Such books have little or no permanent interest and are rarely reread.

Fiction as entertainment

A deeper reason why we read fiction is that we, unconsciously perhaps, seek thereby to escape for a time from reality. We like to forget our humdrum lives and petty troubles and to identify ourselves with characters in an imaginary world. For this reason, as children, we reveled in the story of Cinderella, where the

Fiction offers escape from reality

abused little stepdaughter achieves the reward of virtue. For this reason we enjoy escaping from our own age of hustling commercialism to the "days of old when knights were bold" and Robin Hood eluded the Sheriff of Nottingham; when Ivanhoe rescued Rebecca from the hands of her persecutors; when Jim Hawkins, crouched in the apple barrel, listened to the seadogs plotting against his life. For this reason, too, we like to read about the lives of people who live in lands and climates different from our own. The mysterious odors and sounds and sights of India, for instance, are made romantically real to us by Kipling's *Kim*; the rough but humorous and wholehearted life of the western pioneers in Roaring Camp and Poker Flat is made a part of our experience through the stories of Bret Harte; the quaint charm of life in a little Scotch village is revealed to us in Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy*, *The Little Minister*, and *Auld Licht Idylls*. Many writers to-day produce "best sellers" which owe their popularity to their portrayal of life on western cattle ranches or in the northern woods of Canada, regions not familiar to most people.

A third and more serious reason why we like to read fiction is that it often brings reality closer to us. For instance, George Eliot's books endure partly because the difficulties that her characters meet are precisely such difficulties as people have to meet in real life. The problems of *Silas Marner*, of *Adam Bede*, of *The Mill on the Floss* are problems arising out of human nature; they will be of interest as long as human nature is what it is. A great many human beings are faced with the necessity of accepting the consequences of their own acts just as Godfrey Cass and Maggie Tulliver and Hetty Sorrel are. A great many of us, like Silas Marner and Dolly Winthrop, are forced to grope blindly for faith in the midst of the obvious cruelties and injustices of life.

Fiction as a commentary on life

Sometimes, too, a book is attractive to us in this way not because of any particular problems or conditions that it presents, but because it seems to us "true to life." It gives us pleasure to recognize its people as true. Stories of child life, of school and college life, of country life—"human interest" stories of all kinds—appeal to us for this reason. We say, "How true that is!" or, "I've felt that way myself!" and we thereby gain sympathy and understanding because we see that our experiences are other people's experiences, too. Test this by reading any good story about children and then seeing how much more sympathetically you look at children—just because the story helped you to understand them.

Fiction as a picture of life

It is also interesting to notice to what the interest in a story is due. We like some books merely for their story; usually we do not read these more than once. Others we like for charm of setting, and to these we return more frequently. Once our imagination has been touched by a story of far away and long ago, the glamor is upon us, and we return again and again to be once more under its spell. Still other books attract us because of their characters; it is to these, probably, that we return most often. One who has made the acquaintance of the inimitable characters of Dickens, for instance, can hardly fail to wish to renew that acquaintance. More than one person has felt a lifelong friendship for Jane Eyre, or for Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*, or for Sentimental Tommy, Huckleberry Finn, or Colonel Newcome. One of the chief charms of reading, and especially of rereading, works of fiction lies in the hold that these friends of our imagination have on us. A fourth source of interest in a story is the way in which the author writes, that is, his *style*. Once one grows to like the flavor of Dickens's humor, Thackeray's satire, Hawthorne's sensitiveness, or Steven-

Sources of interest in fiction

son's enthusiasm, one seeks for it again and again. We read and reread Dickens, exclaiming, "Listen to this! Isn't that just like him?" and we never grow tired of him, because his style has made him our friend. A last source of interest is in the theme or idea of a book. A great many serious works of fiction are written to illustrate an idea. For instance one may feel, as Thomas Hardy does, that man is the helpless victim of forces over which he has no control. In that case a book written to exploit that idea, such as *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, will always appeal to him. One may be interested in the problem of sin and the baffling ideas it presents to his mind. In that case he will feel a powerful interest in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Marble Faun*, and *The House of the Seven Gables*. He may feel an intense and contemptuous interest in the hypocrisies of our artificial social life, and then he will delight in *Vanity Fair*. He may be interested in the various problems presented by human relationships of all kinds, in which case he will find stimulation in reading any of George Eliot's novels. A book, then, to be enduringly popular, must have a source of interest in plot, setting, character, or theme which will make it a book to be reread time and again.

There are two types of fiction, romantic and realistic. Romantic fiction is primarily that which offers the reader an escape from reality. It often deals with distant lands and times. The things that happen in it are more exciting or mysterious or adventurous or strange than the things that happen in real life. Sometimes it deals with such things as tournaments and besieged castles and perilous journeys through hostile country as in *Ivanhoe* and *Quentin Durward*. Sometimes it concerns itself with the prolonged struggle of true love against terrible and villainous odds as in *Lorna Doone* and *The Cloister and the Hearth* and *Westward Ho!* Sometimes it is pervaded by an atmosphere

Romantic fiction

of mystery, of suppressed excitement, of strange things about to be revealed, as in *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *The House of the Seven Gables*. Sometimes it is about pirates, hidden treasure, fights at sea, terrible storms, shipwrecks, and thrilling flights from a close pursuing enemy, as in *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, and *Mr. Midshipman Easy*.

The characters of the novelist who looks at life romantically are painted in brighter colors and sketched in bolder outlines than the characters in a realistic story. They are moved by the more elemental emotions such as love, hate, pride, loyalty, or jealousy, and they are not so subtly differentiated as the characters of a realistic novel. They are not usually deep psychological studies. They are *idealized*—made more good or bad or courageous or ugly or beautiful than people in real life. For instance, Rebecca, in *Ivanhoe*, is every inch a heroine; only exalted and heroic motives actuate her. In a realistic novel she would doubtless have been less superhumanly good; little weaknesses and conflicting motives would have made her a mixture of good and bad, strong and weak, as people in real life actually are. As for the Lady Lorna, in *Lorna Doone*, no one has ever seen quite so good and beautiful and sweet and true a creature, but who would exchange her for one less romantic? There is a stimulation, an exhilaration, in reading about stirring heroic figures of more than human size, like d'Artagnan, John Ridd, Brian de Bois Guilbert, Amyas Leigh, Richard the Lion Hearted, John Silver, and the Master of Ballantrae, that makes us unwilling to exchange them for weaker figures of mud and clay such as Arthur Donnithorne, Godfrey Cass, Amelia Sedley, and Tom Tulliver, human though they be.

You must not assume from this that romantic fiction is not true to life. It is life idealized, magnified, raised to the *n*th power. It is, indeed, often improbable. No one person's

life is usually so crowded with breathless adventure as the lives of the great characters of romance. Neither are people usually governed by such simple, elemental, heroic or villainous motives as the heroes and heroines and villains of romance. But the fundamentals of human life are the same. In romance its moving forces are all there, simplified and intensified; romance is thus a true picture of these forces studied individually instead of in the perplexing combinations of real life. A great romance is always true to the spirit of life rather than to its facts. When we read *Quo Vadis*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *A Tale of Two Cities* we never, in our hearts, doubt their truth. Sidney Carton's sacrifice is a true picture of self-sacrifice—just as true as the bickerings of the Dodson sisters in *The Mill on the Floss* or the pathetic jealousies and bigotries and failures of the old men in *Vanity Fair*. Life can be heroic; but in actual existence it is not so steadily heroic as it is in romance.

Realistic fiction

On the other hand the story-teller may prefer to portray life exactly as it looks to him without flinching from the facts and without letting his imagination wander into the land of the ideal. We call such a writer a realist. In realistic fiction the things that happen are usually things that could and that do happen to a great many people in everyday life. It helps us to understand life by making it more real to us. *The Rise of Silas Lapham* by William Dean Howells is an example of this sort of fiction. Much that happens in this story is commonplace. The characters have long conversations about the sort of things that people discuss in real life; they are moved by a mixture of motives, as people are in real life; none of them is heroically good or villainously bad; at a crisis in her life, the heroine behaves in a somewhat silly but unquestionably human way; throughout things happen as they happen in real life. Such a book is not always exciting, but it is inter-

esting as a record of life itself and it is significant because it deals with experiences that are common. George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, *Adam Bede*, and *The Mill on the Floss;* Dickens's *David Copperfield;* and Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and *The Newcomes* are examples of the realistic novel.

The short story

The short story is a special type of prose fiction differing from the novel especially in the matter of length. It is a highly condensed novel. Since it is ordinarily meant to be read at one sitting, the writer must condense his material with extraordinary care; he cannot use it all. He must usually confine the action to one episode in the characters' lives—the one episode which he thinks will best serve his purpose. He cannot show life and character with the wealth of detail that the novelist uses; space does not permit it. Accordingly he must use the technique of story-telling with more careful emphasis than the novelist. His beginnings must be briefer, with explanatory matter reduced to a minimum and devices for arousing interest sharply accentuated. Thus Poe in *The Cask of Amontillado* condenses years of antecedent action into a single sentence:

"The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge."

In *The Masque of the Red Death* Poe begins:

"The 'Red Death' had long devastated the country,"

and at the end of the first three paragraphs the reader is in the very heart of the story. In *A Descent into the Maelstrom* the beginning is no less emphatic:

"We had now reached the summit of the loftiest crag. For some minutes the old man seemed too exhausted to speak."

These examples are typical of the essential condensation of the whole structure of the short story, a condensation as necessary in the middle and end as in the beginning.

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THE CHARTERHOUSE, LONDON

To this retreat Colonel Newcome in *The Newcomes* goes to end his days after the loss of his fortune.

THE STAGE OF THE FORTUNE THEATER (1599–1600)

(From a model in the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University)

Courtesy of Famous Players-Lasky Corp.

A Scene from "Huckleberry Finn"

The ending is, indeed, more important than the beginning. It must be dramatic, with pointed emphasis. Notice the skill with which Poe tells his stories with a gradual crescendo, up to the final climax. The victim in *The Pit and the Pendulum* is barely saved when the story ends:

"The fiery walls rushed back! An outstretched arm caught my own as I fell, fainting, into the abyss. It was that of General Lasalle. The French army had entered Toledo. The Inquisition was in the hands of its enemies."

In *The Fall of the House of Usher*, the narrator has scarcely escaped when:

"There was a long, tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the '*House of Usher*'."

Stevenson's *Markheim* works up to a masterly close when the hero, confronting the maid upon the threshold, says with something like a smile:

"You had better go for the police. I have killed your master."

That is all. The story is over.

Between the beginning and the ending of a short story there is also inexorable economy. Inclusion and exclusion, subordination and emphasis must be carefully planned.

Once his story is started the author must be careful to keep the emphasis wholly on the single episode he wishes to develop, rigorously excluding all irrelevant material. Whatever methods he uses to develop plot, to secure suspense, and to delineate character, he must keep an unwavering singleness of purpose. All technical details relative to the handling of plot, character, and setting have to be selected with a keen eye for the effect he wishes to produce. Only the most necessary events must be included. Only essential characters can be introduced. Setting can be emphasized

only as it has bearing on plot and character. Even the methods by which these things are done must be chosen because they, of all methods, best suit the author's purpose. It is required of the short story that it be capable of being read at a single sitting, that it deal with a single episode, that it accomplish a single purpose, and that it create a single impression. With these limitations of condensation the short story comes under the heading of prose fiction.

A story has to have at least three elements. In the first place something must happen. This happening is the *plot.*

Three necessary elements to any story

In the second place, what happens must happen to somebody or because of somebody. The people concerned with these happenings are the *characters* of the story. In the third place, what happens must happen somewhere at some time. The time and the place supply the *setting* of the story.

PLOT

Not every narrative has a plot. A disconnected record of unrelated events may be narrative, but unless it has a *plan,* it has no plot. A story with a plot is really a story with a plan. A diary, for instance, or a letter telling about your experiences in a careless way in the order you happen to think of them, cannot be said to have a plot. A writer, then, must have method in his narrative; he must decide beforehand what to include and what to omit, what to emphasize and what to pass over lightly. His story should advance by logical, or at least by relevant, stages to a certain definite, inevitable end. In a detective story the reader wants to feel that each new clue helps toward the solution of the mystery; in a love story the reader has a right to demand that each step in the plot draw nearer the conclusion; in a story of adventure the reader expects each adventure to lead somewhere. Not every story follows a rigid plan, but no

good story is told in a careless, haphazard manner. Perfection in plot construction is rarely attained; sometimes mechanical perfection of structure is secured at the expense of other more essential qualities. *Silas Marner* and *The Scarlet Letter*, however, have practically perfect plot construction without the sacrifice of character. Both these books show deep insight into human nature, both were written to illustrate significant human problems; yet both are as carefully developed in plot as the most logical of detective stories. The first requirement, then, that we should make of the plot in a work of fiction is that it follow some sort of plan of progress, including what is necessary, omitting what is irrelevant, emphasizing strongly the important steps in its progress, touching only lightly upon what is relatively unimportant, and leading up to a logical and satisfactory conclusion. A book that did all this would have a perfectly constructed plot.

A plan the first essential of plot

The plot of a novel may combine two or more stories in one. A minor plot carried on in connection with the main plot is called a *subplot*. In *Ivanhoe*, for instance, we have a story about Ivanhoe and the Lady Rowena, one about Rebecca and the Templar, and one about Prince John and King Richard. These are all carried along in such a way that one does not detract from the interest of the other but is closely connected with it. The story of Ivanhoe and Rowena is connected with that of Rebecca and Bois Guilbert by having Rebecca, in love with Ivanhoe, nurse him back to life; by having DeBracy, a follower of the Templar's, abduct Rowena so that they are all in the castle of Torquilstone at once. And as Ivanhoe's and the Templar's fortunes are inextricably bound up with those of Prince John and King Richard, all three stories are woven into one as different

Subplots

Ivanhoe as a threefold story

colored threads are woven into one harmonious pattern. To the reader, all these different plot-relationships are quite clear. *Silas Marner* is another example of a successful fusion of main and subplots; in fact, the story of Silas Marner is so closely related to that of Godfrey Cass that neither could do without the other.

Silas Marner as a twofold story

If the different parts of a story are not closely related in this way, the story is said to lack *unity*. An author may weave as many stories as he chooses, but the final pattern must give the effect of being one harmonious whole; we must feel that it is really one story. *Ivanhoe* and *Silas Marner* are both entirely unified. Some novels, however, have serious digressions from the main thread of the narrative. *The Three Musketeers*, for instance, is really a series of different stories about the same characters. The episodes about the jewels and the episodes about the wickedness and tragic end of Milady de Winter are only slightly connected; each one could easily be made into a story by itself. We should, then, notice whether the plot of a story has unity or not, that is, whether or not there is any serious intrusion of irrelevant matter.

The principle of artistic unity

We might also notice whether the plot itself grows out of human nature or out of chance and coincidence. This consideration applies more to realistic than to romantic fiction, however, for in a romance we cheerfully accept the unusual and the accidental as part of the excitement. But in a story purporting to show life as it is, there should be no undue use of mere coincidence. Chance plays a part in our lives, it is true, and is therefore admissible as part of a story of real life, but our success or failure in life depends chiefly on ourselves, a fact which the novelist must recognize.

The influence of chance and the influence of human nature on plot

Silas Marner is a good case in point. Much of this story

depends on the merest accident—the drawing of lots, the staking of Wildfire, the death of Molly so near to Silas's cottage. Indeed, Silas's cataleptic fits are a little too opportune to be entirely plausible. But, on the other hand, George Eliot has used human nature so skilfully that everything in the story seems to happen more because people are what they are than because of chance. The motives and reactions of Godfrey, Dunstan, Nancy, and Molly are so natural and so inevitable a part of their characters that we are inclined to discount the influence of coincidence. For if Godfrey had not been the weak, vacillating man he was, the whole story would have been different; if Dunstan had not been conceited, bullying, and deceitful, Wildfire would never have been killed; if Molly had not had a very natural desire for revenge, she would not have fallen in front of Silas's cottage, and Eppie would never have come into the story. In this work the influences of chance and character are so skilfully blended that we are forced to acquit the author of the charge of improbability. But the undue use of coincidence is a thing we should watch; in a story that is supposed to represent life as it is, the important things which happen to the characters must not depend wholly on circumstances over which they have no control; human nature should play its part, too. A good deal of life is, perhaps, dependent on chance, but surely not all of it.

Chance and human nature in Silas Marner

There are certain technical details in the writing of prose fiction which need consideration. The title is important more from a commercial than from an artistic point of view, but there are certain standards of good taste. A title should, naturally, arouse interest in the story and give some clue to its character—that is, it should be interesting and suggestive. *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Last Class*,

Importance of the title

Suggestiveness of title

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The Gift of the Magi, and *The Man Who Would be King* are interesting and suggestive titles. Brevity is a desirable quality in a title; a long title is cumbersome, a double title unnecessary. Titles like *The Shot, They, The Queen of Spades, Luck, The Black Cat, Marjorie Daw*, and *The Birthmark* are suggestive and at the same time brief. A title should also be euphonious, that is, easy to say. *The Light that Failed, A Tale of Two Cities, Wuthering Heights*, and *The Master of Ballantrae*, once pronounced, linger in the memory. Finally, a title should not be commonplace or sensational. These qualities cheapen a book in the mind of the prospective reader.

THE POINT OF VIEW

A story may be told in the first, second, or third person. The first person often makes it vivid and convincing, especially if it is a story of the adventures of one person or a ghost story. But it has limitations, as one person cannot reasonably be expected to see into the minds and motives of other characters or to be at more than one place at a time or to know all the circumstances that sometimes go to make up a story.

Telling a story in the first person

An author sometimes tries to avoid this difficulty by making two different people, or even more, tell the story, but this device is not usually successful, as it requires the reader to shift his interest and his point of view suddenly. Some stories that are told in the first person throughout with great success are *David Copperfield, Jane Eyre, Lorna Doone, Henry Esmond, Kidnapped*, and *Huckleberry Finn*. *The Master of Ballantrae*, to avoid the effect of egotism, is told in the first person by a minor character.

Devices for maintaining the first person

The use of the second person in story-telling is exceedingly rare. It is sometimes found in short stories, usually of child life. It produces a peculiarly vivid, intimate, reminiscent atmosphere.

Telling a story in the second person

On the whole the use of the third person seems most desirable for a long story. It enables the author to be omniscient, to see and to hear everything, to be sympathetic with all his characters, to portray their psychology more directly for us, and to insert his own comment if need be. Most stories are told from this point of view.

Telling a story in the third person

THE BEGINNING

The beginning of a story is important because it must at once make clear the situation and the characters, explain all that the reader needs to know about what has taken place before the story begins, and arouse immediate interest. To accomplish all this is no light task. There are various methods of beginning a story, any one of which is successful if it accomplishes these things.

Requirements of the beginning

All that has happened before the story begins is called the *antecedent action.* Sometimes it is necessary to explain the antecedent action in some detail; in this case it is as well to do it at once, even at the risk of detracting from the interest. Some authors reveal the antecedent action gradually; in a mystery story or a story of characters influenced by past events, this may well be done. In *The House of the Seven Gables,* Hawthorne explains the antecedent action immediately, but in so doing contrives to throw an air of mystery over the chapter that creates suspense at once and makes the reader anxious to go on. In *The Rise of Silas Lapham,* Howells makes Silas

The antecedent action

explain the antecedent action in an interview, and at the same time reveal his own character.

The first chapter

There are various ways of plunging into the first chapter. Authors of modern novels often place their characters at once in an interesting situation and begin with conversation. This is a good method if the conversation is clear and interesting and we are able to identify the speakers without difficulty. Sir Walter Scott usually chooses a romantic setting for his beginnings—the dark forest with the onrushing storm in *Ivanhoe;* the old Elizabethan inn, so full of possibilities, in *Kenilworth;* but he spends so much time in getting his narrative under way that young readers sometimes find his beginnings tiresome. Some authors, then, begin with description, a good plan if the setting is to play an important part in the story—provided that the description is not too long. Others begin with the opening situation in good brisk narrative and lose no time in getting their story under way. Stevenson is an adept at this sort of beginning, as *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped* demonstrate. Still others begin with the attention focussed on the principal characters, which is a good method if the characters are to be few and the interest in them intense, as in *The Scarlet Letter.* One cannot, therefore, lay down rules for beginning a story, but it is always interesting to see how an author uses means to an end at the very start of his story.

METHOD OF NARRATION

Narration by letters

There are a good many ways of telling a story, just as there are many ways of beginning, but no one method is necessarily the best one. Some of the earliest novels in English, for instance Richardson's *Pamela* and Fanny Burney's *Evelina,* are told by means

of letters exchanged between the characters. This method, however, does not usually make for artistic unity; moreover it demands a constant shift of the reader's point of view. Not many novelists employ it. Thomas Bailey Aldrich's *Marjorie Daw* uses this method cleverly.

A more common method is the straightforward narrative of events in their chronological order. In a complicated story in which many characters and one or more subplots are involved this method is not simple or easily done. Scott uses this method a great deal, but his stories were so complicated that he often had to carry along his different sets of people and episodes in a parallel order. In *Ivanhoe* for example, we follow Rowena and DeBracy and Cedric up to a certain point; then we leave them and go back to the Templar and Rebecca and Isaac; leaving them, we give our attention to Locksley or to the Black Knight. In this way Scott marshals his characters and events throughout the story until they are all brought together at some exciting crisis, such as the siege of Torquilstone, and then separated again to be brought together once more.

The chronological method

Some difficulties of the chronological method in handling subplots

In stories of adventure, especially adventure through a long and perilous journey, such as *Quentin Durward* and *The Cloister and the Hearth*, the chronological method is probably the best one possible, but even in these it may be necessary to go back a bit to pick up a few threads or to explain what was happening meanwhile. This going backward is the *retrogressive method.* In *Treasure Island* it is used at least once, and in detective stories, in which evidence naturally leads one back to the solution, it is often necessary. It is usually combined with the chronological method. It must be used with care, lest it become confus-

The retrogressive method combined with the chronological

ing or tiresome. The modern novelist Joseph Conrad makes frequent use of this method.

Another method is the relating of more or less detached episodes involving the same characters. Such stories are often interesting because of certain scenes and situations in them rather than because of the sweep and power of the narrative as a whole. They are thus likely to be episodic and somewhat lacking in artistic unity. In *The Cloister and the Hearth*, for example, certain scenes are so intensely exciting that they could almost stand by themselves, detached from the rest of the story. Thus, Gerard's encounter with the huge bear whose cub he had killed is often quoted as a separate bit of narrative:

Detached episodes

"Huge as she was, she seemed to double herself (it was her long hair bristling with rage): she raised her head big as a bull's, her swine-shaped jaws opened wide at them, her eyes turned to blood and flame, and she rushed upon them, scattering the leaves about her as she came. 'Shoot!' screamed Denys, but Gerard stood shaking from head to foot, useless."

This brief quotation shows how absorbing a story may be in what are, after all, only detailed episodes. No reader is likely to leave Gerard in this predicament; he will read on, not only through this episode but through others more or less unrelated. Each episode holds his interest. For instance, there is the passage where the two companions, trapped in the chamber of the inn, await death at the hands of thieves and cutthroats:

"There was another harrowing silence. Then a single light footstep on the stairs; and nothing more. Then a light crept under the door; and nothing more. Presently there was a gentle scratching, not half so loud as a mouse's, and the false doorpost opened by degrees, and left a perpendicular space through which the light streamed in. . . . The candle was held up and shaded from be-

hind a man's hand. He was inspecting the beds from the threshold, satisfied that his victims were both in bed. The man glided into the apartment."

What reader would fail to go on? Best of all, after this episode is safely passed there is a new one with a different interest bearing him along until he turns the seven-hundredth page with a sigh that the tale is ended. Considering its length, *The Cloister and the Hearth* is a remarkable example of the suspense that may be gained by the detached episode method of narration. The same thing is true of *The Three Musketeers*. This does not mean that these stories exist regardless of the main thread of the narrative, but that the interest goes from episode to episode instead of moving steadily onward with ever-increasing power. This method, however, combined with the chronological, is the most satisfactory.

Two methods less commonly used are that of telling a story wholly by means of dialogue and that of telling it by means of a diary. These methods are usually successful more from cleverness than from general practicability. *The Dolly Dialogues* by Anthony Hope illustrate the one method, and *Robinson Crusoe* the other.

Dialogue and diary

A combination of methods—usually of the chronological and the detached episode—is most common; but too many combinations in one book are not likely to be either artistic or practicable. Whatever method is employed should give an onward sweep to the narrative so that the interest increases steadily.

The end to be achieved by all methods

A plot is made up of incidents and episodes. An *incident* is something that happens; an *episode* is a group of related incidents. In *Silas Marner* the staking of Wildfire is a single incident; all the incidents connected with the selling and killing of Wildfire and the consequences thereof to Silas Marner form an episode, which

Incidents and episodes

we might call the Wildfire episode. In *Ivanhoe* the death of the Saxon Princess, Ulrica, in the flames of Torquilstone is an incident; all the incidents connected with the events at the castle form an episode which might well be called the siege of Torquilstone. Not all incidents are necessary to the plot. Those that do advance the plot are called *plot incidents*. Those that do not directly contribute to the plot, but help to reveal character or setting are called *character incidents* or *incidents to reveal setting*. But in an artistic book all incidents contribute something towards plot, character, or setting. In *Silas Marner*, for instance, the incident about Silas and his earthenware pot has no bearing on the plot; we never hear of it again. But it does show the character of Silas. Nancy's insisting that sisters should dress alike does not help the plot, but it does reveal the character of Nancy, with her strict, unyielding, narrow ideas of right and wrong. The death of Molly in the snow, however, is essential to the plot; the whole story hinges on it. On the other hand, the scene at the Rainbow Inn does not help much either towards advancing the plot or towards throwing light on the principal characters. Its function is to reveal setting by showing us the sort of village Raveloe is; hence it has a rightful place in the story.

Incidents to advance plot, to portray character, and to reveal setting

An incident to show character

An incident to reveal setting

Besides incidents and episodes, a story usually contains a series of *minor crises*, exciting moments where the struggle of the opposing forces that make up the plot is sharp and intense, to a big *climax* or turning point in the struggle. In some books there is a series of climaxes of equal importance. *Ivanhoe* is a book of this kind. In others there is but one climax, with smaller dramatic moments leading up to it. The death of the Judge is the big turning point in *The House of the Seven Gables*, but

Minor crises and the climax

there are also exciting moments leading up to it—when he tries to force his way past Phœbe and Hepzibah to the terror-stricken Clifford, for instance, and when Phœbe departs leaving her helpless cousins alone. In *Jane Eyre* there are numerous exciting scenes leading up to the interrupted wedding and just as many points of interest thereafter. In *Kidnapped* and *Treasure Island* and *Lorna Doone* the story advances steadily from one minor crisis to another. It is these moments that add greatly to the suspense of a book and make it possible for the author to move his story onward with increasing rapidity and interest.

Another technical term used in the writing of fiction is the *obligatory scene*. An obligatory scene is one which the author has led us to expect and which, therefore, he is in duty bound to let us see. When in *Silas Marner*, we are told that sixteen years after Molly's death Godfrey Cass is to confess to Nancy, we feel entitled to be present at that scene; if George Eliot had not shown it to us, she would have broken faith with us. In *The House of the Seven Gables* we are made to expect that some day Judge Pyncheon will suffer the curse of the Maules, and we feel that we should be there when that dreadful event occurs. Hawthorne recognizes his obligation to the reader, giving a scene perhaps unnecessarily long. In *Jane Eyre*, we feel that we should see the solution of the mystery of the maniac imprisoned in the house; it is with an expectant thrill that we approach the outcome. In *Kenilworth* we expect to see the death of Amy Robsart ourselves, and the author does not disappoint us. In *Lorna Doone*, we are led to expect a final fight to the death between John Ridd and Carver Doone, and that, too, is given us. In *The Cloister and the Hearth* we expect that some day Margaret and Gerard will meet face to face after their long separation, and we see that tragic reunion. In *The Master of Ballantrae* we

The obligatory scene

know that the final clash between the Master and his brother is inevitable, and we should have felt cheated had it not been described for us. An author, then, should give the scenes which he has led the reader to expect.

Importance of suspense

The author's chief means of creating interest in his narrative is suspense. This element of suspense is very important and many are the devices for securing it.

Foreshadowing

A common way of securing suspense is by *foreshadowing*,—that is, by hinting as to what is to come. Stories of adventure and mystery are usually full of foreshadowing, but this device is not confined to such stories. In *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne hints that Clifford knows a secret about the house which he will ultimately reveal; that Holgrave is more intimately connected with the story of the Maules and the Pyncheons than we realize; that the Judge has done Hepzibah and Clifford a terrible wrong, that he will attempt to extort a secret from Clifford, and that he will in the end suffer the curse of the Maules. In *Silas Marner*, it is hinted that Molly may take a drop too much laudanum some day, and that Dunstan has met the fate which is afterward shown to have been his. Foreshadowing is a common and a valuable method of securing suspense, for it makes the reader anxious to see if his suspicions will be confirmed.

Effective chapter endings

Another method is by ending a chapter effectively so that the reader will be eager to go on to the next one. When we learn that Dunstan Cass "stepped forth into the darkness" with Silas Marner's gold, we are naturally anxious to learn what became of him; and when Silas finds a human body half hidden in the snow, we are all eagerness to know what happens next. When we read in *Vanity Fair* that "Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his

heart," the dramatic close to the chapter makes it certain that we shall read on.

Still a third way of securing suspense is by withholding information which the reader would like to know. In *Silas Marner*, when we are not told for almost a third of the book what became of Dunstan Cass, our curiosity becomes strong indeed. In *Jane Eyre*, when we suspect that there is a mysterious person kept under lock and key in Thornfield Manor, we are naturally anxious to know more about her. In *Kidnapped*, when David and Alan become separated, we read on for several chapters to see what has become of Alan. Scott frequently leaves one group of characters in a perilous position and takes up another thread of the narrative.

Suspense secured by withholding information

Another means of securing suspense that is especially common in romantic fiction is by *disguise*. In *Ivanhoe*, the mysterious Palmer who

Disguise

> "stooped over the bed of the recumbent swineherd, and whispered something in his ear in Saxon,"

and the Black Knight illustrate the use of this device. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* shows the value of disguise in creating uncertainty.

A method somewhat akin to withholding information is the inserting of description at an exciting point. In scenes of shipwreck, as in *David Copperfield* and *Kidnapped;* or of fire, as in *Ivanhoe;* or fights and slaughter, as in *The Cloister and the Hearth*, *Quentin Durward*, and *Westward Ho!*, description is essential for creating an atmosphere of excitement. Even in quieter books, a passage of description interpolated at an exciting point—for example, the passage where the Judge sends Hepzibah for Clifford in *The House of the Seven Gables*—is a valuable means of increasing suspense.

How description secures suspense

Other methods are *surprise*, that is, the sudden occurrence of something unexpected; *dramatic moments*, which are minor crises, and *climax*. The unexpected appearance of the princess in the forest in *Westward Ho!* and the shooting of Lorna on her wedding day in *Lorna Doone* are examples of surprise; the defiance of the Templar by Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*, the murder of the Bishop by William de la Marck in *Quentin Durward*, and the death of George in *Vanity Fair* are examples of dramatic moments; the sacrifice of Sidney Carton in *A Tale of Two Cities*, the interrupted wedding in *Jane Eyre*, the final expiation of Arthur Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter*, and the duel between the Master and his brother in *The Master of Ballantrae* are examples of climax.

Suspense by surprise, by dramatic moments, and by climax

All these methods of securing suspense are legitimate and all are used frequently enough to make it worth your while to study their use in the next novel you read.

THE ENDING OF A STORY

The ending of a story is not so difficult as the beginning, because the story has been steadily progressing towards a preconceived end. The two dangers to be avoided in an ending are prolonging it unnecessarily after the story is over through reluctance to say farewell to the characters; and sacrificing logic and probability for the sake of making a "happy ending." It would have been a mistake for George Eliot to end *Silas Marner* by giving Godfrey Cass complete happiness after he had turned a blessing from his door for so long. A happy ending to *The Cloister and the Hearth* is impossible, and the final separation of David and Alan in *Kidnapped* is inevitable. It is an inexcusable weakness to end a story happily when its whole course has tended in the other direction. On the other hand, a story of a search

From the Mary Harrod Northend Collection

THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES,
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

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THE TOWER OF LONDON

With this famous building is associated much of English history and legend which have found imaginative expression in historical novels.

for a treasure ought not to end with the treasure unattained, and a stirring bit of romantic fiction ought not to mar its ending with unnecessary gloom. We want Quentin Durward to marry Isabelle of Croye, and Sir Kenneth of *The Talisman* to be rewarded for his courage and loyalty and long-suffering. The ending of a story should, therefore, be logical and consistent, and not merely happy or unhappy to satisfy the passing mood of the reader. It should also be clear and certain; the reader does not like to be left with something unexplained.

WHAT TO CONSIDER IN STUDYING THE CHARACTERS

The Characters and the Plot

The characters are usually the most interesting as well as the most profitable source of study in any story of permanent worth. In fact, as we have seen, in the most human stories the plot grows out of the characters. Many a novelist creates his characters in his imagination and then lets them work out their own story. Even in romantic fiction it is frequently the characters who are the mainsprings of the action as well as the chief source of interest. A great part of the action of *The Three Musketeers*, for instance, proceeds from the wicked machinations of Milady de Winter; *Kidnapped* is quite as much a story of character as of incident; in *The Cloister and the Hearth* one of the most charming things is the character of the hero, Gerard. In Scott's romances the subordinate characters frequently walk away with the interest at the expense of the hero and heroine. Who does not find King Louis and Duke Charles, Hayraddin and Galeotti more interesting than Quentin Durward and Isabelle of Croye? Who does not find Ivanhoe and the Lady Rowena pale before the fascinations of Rebecca and Brian de Bois Guilbert—even before Friar Tuck, Locksley, Wamba, and Isaac?

Importance of character

This brings us to a necessary distinction between the types of characters in their relation to the plot. The *principal characters* are those with whose destinies the plot is chiefly concerned; the *subordinate characters* are those which are used to fill out the story.

Principal and subordinate characters

Uses of Subordinate Characters

The uses of subordinate characters are many. Sometimes they serve to create humor. One has only to read any story by Dickens in order to realize this. The chief source of the humor which is one of the glories of *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *Great Expectations* lies in characters who have no great bearing on the plot: Mrs. Gummidge,

Subordinate characters to create humor

"a lone lorn creetur, and everythink goes contrary with her";

Mrs. Micawber who, on no provocation whatever, insists upon assuring David that,

"Mr. Micawber has his faults. I do not deny that he is improvident. I do not deny that he has kept me in the dark as to his resources and liabilities both, but I never will desert Mr. Micawber";

Newman Noggs,

"a tall man, of middle age, with two goggle-eyes,—a rubicund nose, a cadaverous face, and a suit of clothes—if the term be allowable when they suited him not at all—much the worse for wear, very much too small, and placed upon such a short allowance of buttons that it was quite marvelous how he contrived to keep them on";

Mrs. Wititterly,

"of a very excitable nature, very delicate, very fragile, a hot-house plant, an exotic";

Mr. Wopsle,

"united to a Roman nose and a large bald forehead";

Mrs. Pocket,

"the object of a queer sort of respectful pity because she had not married a title; while Mr. Pocket was the object of a queer sort of respectful reproach because he had never got one."

Because they are great humorous creations, the subordinate characters in Dickens often eclipse our interest in his heroes and heroines.

Again, the subordinate characters may contribute philosophy which the author does not care to give himself. They make interpretative comment on the actions of the principal characters, thus helping to point out the moral application of the story. The chief comment on the problem of faith in *Silas Marner*, for example, is given by Dolly Winthrop. And in *The House of the Seven Gables* Uncle Venner,

Subordinate characters to contribute philosophy

"a miscellaneous old gentleman, partly himself but, in good measure, somebody else," who "had studied the world at street corners, and other posts equally well adapted for just observation, and was as ready to give out his wisdom as a town-pump to give water,"

roams through the story for no other purpose than to contribute philosophy.

Sometimes the subordinate characters help to reveal setting, that is, they contribute *local color*. The company at the Rainbow Inn does this in *Silas Marner*. In any historical novel, historical characters are introduced for this purpose, for example, Sir Walter Raleigh in *Kenilworth;* Edmund Spenser, Sir Richard Grenville, and Sir Francis Drake in *Westward Ho!;* Judge Jeffreys in *Lorna Dorne;* William of Orange in *The Black Tulip;* Dick Steele in *Henry Esmond;*

Subordinate characters to contribute local color

and prominent figures of the American Revolution in *The Spy*. *The Cloister and the Hearth* is crowded with minor characters that give us a vivid picture of life in the Middle Ages.

Subordinate characters to suggest numbers

Still again subordinate characters are used because the scene requires a crowded stage, as in the party at the Red House in *Silas Marner*. We do not again meet Mrs. Crackenthorpe,

"a small blinking woman, who fidgetted incessantly with her lace, ribbons, and gold chain, turning her head about and making subdued noises, very much like a guinea-pig that twitches its nose and soliloquizes in all company indiscriminately";

or Mrs. Kimble,

"the Squire's sister, as well as the doctor's wife—a double dignity, with which her diameter was in direct proportion";

or the two Miss Gunns,

"the wine merchant's daughters from Lytherly, dressed in the height of fashion, with the tightest skirts and the shortest waists, and gazed at by Miss Ladbrook (of the old Pastures) with a shyness not unsustained by inward criticism,"

but we need them to give reality to the scene.

Subordinate characters to throw light on principal characters

Subordinate characters are also used to throw light on the principal characters through contrast or comment. Blanche Ingram in *Jane Eyre* with her

"sloping shoulders, graceful neck, dark eyes, and black ringlets,"

with her high features, her satirical laugh, and her "arched and haughty lip," is a mere foil to plain little Jane, who has charms denied to many a more beautiful heroine. In *Vanity Fair* many characters are brought in contact with Becky Sharp just to display her cleverness and unscrupulousness.

In *Lorna Doone* minor characters sing John Ridd's praises; he cannot be expected to do it himself.

It is not usually considered careful artistry to allow subordinate characters to intrude upon our interest in the main characters. Such intrusion is, however, by no means uncommon. The reader sometimes grows impatient over the author's elaboration of a minor character. In Dickens, however, we forgive the intrusion of the minor characters because they are such inimitable creations.

Undue interest in subordinate characters

Number and Range of Characters

The number and range of characters is an indication of the author's breadth of sympathy and his power to fill his imaginary world with widely diverse creatures. Some great novels have a limited range of characters. Usually such novels are devoted to a profound study of three or four characters and their relationships with one another. *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Marble Faun* are good examples of this type. In *The Scarlet Letter* the interest centers in four essential characters with the stern Puritan community as background for the spiritual tragedy of their lives. In *The Marble Faun* the economy of characters is fundamentally similar, but carried out less sucessfully. On the other hand *David Copperfield* is crowded with people; and an astonishing number of them—David, Uriah Heap, the Micawbers, Betsy Trotwood, little Emily, Traddles, the Pegottys, Mrs. Gummidge, Mr. Dick, Barkis—are unforgettable. Scott, too, crowds his canvas with people from all walks of life, though they are often more picturesque than profound. It is always interesting to note whether a book contains many or few characters, whether they come from limited or varied walks of life, whether one type is

Number and range of characters

as successfully developed as another—in short, what the range and depth of the author's power of characterization is.

Static and Kinetic Characters

Static and kinetic characters

Characters in a story either remain fundamentally unchanged or show change and growth as the story proceeds. Those that do not change are called *static*; those that do, *kinetic*.

Characters that show development

A novel usually takes its characters over a critical period of their lives and tries to show the effect that the circumstances of the story have upon them. In a novel, therefore, the principal characters are usually of the kinetic type, and only the subordinate ones static. A novel which delves deeply into the changes that time and circumstances bring about in a man's mind and heart is often called a *psychological* novel. George Eliot's *Romola*, for instance, is such a story, as is also Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Such a study of changing or developing character was one of the chief interests of Thackeray. We feel that Beatrix Esmond, Becky Sharp, George, Amelia, and Dobbin, in fact all the principal characters in Thackeray, develop in a certain inevitable direction, that their thoughts and habits are forming the hard mold in which their characters will ultimately be cast. Again in *The Rise of Silas Lapham* we watch the hero grow in moral strength as his fortunes decline; in *The Mill on the Floss* we watch Maggie and Tom from the time they are little children to their final tragic end, and we feel that each step in their development is the logical outcome of those that have preceded it; in *Sentimental Tommy* we follow Tommy along his precocious, sensitive, self-centered, imaginative path of life through childhood and boyhood, his every act and thought and word what his past career has led

us to expect. These characters are all kinetic; they develop, though they do not necessarily undergo violent changes.

Romantic fiction, however, usually, but not always, takes a type figure and endows him with certain striking qualities without seeking to change or develop those qualities in detail as the story proceeds. In *The Three Musketeers*, D'Artagnan is perhaps a bit sadder and wiser from experience at the end, but he is in the main the same impetuous, courageous, gallant, arrogant, selfish young man that he was at the beginning. John Ridd is just as boyish and strong and wholesome, and Lorna as sweet and true at the end of *Lorna Doone* as they were in the beginning, although both have grown up in the meantime. In *The House of the Seven Gables* the Judge is the same rather heavy villain all through the book. In *The Talisman* Sir Kenneth's character undergoes no subtle change, nor does Bois Guilbert's in *Ivanhoe*, or the Master's in *The Master of Ballantrae*. This is because a romance is interested in characters as they are rather than as they may develop. A romance is not usually psychological; its characters are thus usually static rather than kinetic.

Static characters

Sometimes romantic characters are so exaggerated that they become caricatures, easily recognizable by a few outstanding traits or expressions, like the prominent figures in a cartoon. Dickens is a master of caricatures; almost everything said or done by his inimitable characters is exaggerated. We recognize them by their peculiar mannerisms, their startling clothes, their remarkable physiognomies, and their constantly repeated expressions. The strange creatures that live in *David Copperfield* are easily identified by their pet phrases: "I never will desert Mr. Micawber"; "Janet, Donkeys!"; "Barkis is willin'"; "Generally speaking, I don't like boys"; "Waiting for something to turn up"; "lone lorn creetur." But

Characters that are caricatures

the Micawbers, Sairy Gamps, Uriah Heeps, Bill Sykes's, and Rosa Dartles of this delightful sort of fiction, immortal though they be, must not for a moment be thought of as real people from real life. Real they are in the sense that they are astonishingly vivid, but human beings they are not. Uriah Heep is an everlasting type of false humility, Bill Sykes has come to be a synonym for brutal criminality, but in real life there are no such exaggerated types. Human nature is too complex to produce unadulterated types. Modern novelists are inclined to present human nature in all its complexity rather than with the engaging simplicity of Dickens and Scott.

Caricatures not really portraits of human nature

INTERACTION OF PLOT, SETTING, AND CHARACTER

Character is often influenced by plot and setting. When a character acts as he does because the plot demands it of him instead of because it is the natural course for him to take, we say that he is unduly influenced by the plot. Silas Marner's cataleptic fit and Molly Farren's overdose of laudanum are a bit too opportune to be perfectly natural; their occurrence at this particular time is demanded by the plot. If they did not act in this way at this time, the story could not go on. All that the author can do in such a case is to make the actions seem consistent with the nature of the character, as George Eliot does satisfactorily. If, however, a character is made to do violently inconsistent or unnatural things demanded of him by the exigencies of the plot, the story ceases to be a sincere and faithful picture of life. It is natural that Maisie should desert the blind artist in *The Light that Failed*, because she is a selfish, shallow girl; to have changed her nature inconsistently at the last moment to secure a happy ending would have spoiled the book. On the other hand, the con-

Influence of the plot on the characters

Molding the characters to fit the plot

duct of some of the extremely villainous villains of Charles Reade and Dumas seems inconceivable. The jealousy of the tulip grower in *The Black Tulip* and the wickedness of Milady de Winter in *The Three Musketeers* are hard to believe; but the plot demands that these people act as they do. In judging these stories we must discount the influence of plot on character.

Influence of setting on character

The setting, or environment, of a story often exercises an interesting influence on the characters. Such an influence is apt to be true to life, for environment has its effect on all people in real life. Sometimes it is something specific about the environment that influences the characters' lives, like the stone pits in *Silas Marner*, the impregnable stronghold in *Lorna Doone*, the house in *The House of the Seven Gables*, or the huge pile of earth in *Sussex Gorse*. But more often it is the general location, the climate, the period of history, or the character of the inhabitants that is significant. Every character in *The Call of the Wild*, for instance, feels the influence of the North. In *The Last Days of Pompeii* the characters are at the mercy of the setting. The stern Puritan community in *The Scarlet Letter* leaves its lasting imprint on the minds and souls of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale. The characters in *Westward Ho!* are animated by the enthusiasms and prejudices of the Elizabethan Age, and every individual in *The Cloister and the Hearth* is partly a product of the Middle Ages. In any novel setting may have a decisive influence on character.

The influence of the characters on each other

The influence of one character on another is also true to life. People cannot live in communities or families without exercising an influence on each other's lives; neither can characters in a story exist independently. In *Silas Marner* the influence of character on character is clear. If Squire

Cass had been a different sort of man, his sons would have turned out differently; if they had turned out differently, the whole life of Silas Marner would have been different; yet Squire Cass probably never gave Silas a thought. If Molly Farren had been different, Godfrey need never have concealed his marriage and Eppie would never have come to Silas. If Nancy had been different, Godfrey could have adopted Eppie, thereby altering the development of Silas. An example of the less tangible influences of human relationships is found in *The Rise of Silas Lapham.* Mrs. Corey cannot call on Mrs. Lapham without exercising on her a subtle influence that leads to matters of importance to both families. The unexplainable antagonism that Penelope arouses in the Corey ladies goes far toward making all their lives unpleasant and her marriage with Tom doubly difficult. This influence of character on character exists in fiction because it exists in life.

WAYS OF REVEALING CHARACTER

Character may be revealed in many varied ways. One of the favorite methods of George Eliot, one which is followed by many modern novelists, is *analysis.* The author explains carefully what is going on in a character's mind, making clear the reasons for that character's motives and reactions. The analysis of the motives which caused Dunstan's theft, Godfrey's vacillation, and Nancy's unwillingness to adopt a child show how this method works.

Character revealed by analysis

Another common method is *description.* This must not be confused with analysis, which is concerned with the mind of a character. Description is a word picture of the character's appearance. This method is essential, though of course other methods are combined with it. To reveal character, however,

Character revealed by description

the picture must do more than portray the character's outward appearance; it must suggest the qualities which go with this appearance. The picture of the Sire de Malétroit in Stevenson's short story, *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*, is successful in giving the actual appearance of the man, at the same time suggesting what sort of man he is.

The method of *dialogue* is frequently used. What characters say shows what they are. This is not the same thing as saying that dialogue must be natural. Dialogue may be natural and yet not character-revealing; and sometimes it may even fail in naturalness and still be character revealing. In *The Rise of Silas Lapham* the dialogue, which is genuinely natural, is the chief means of character portrayal.

Character revealed by dialogue

Sometimes a single incident will reveal character as tellingly as pages of analysis, description, or dialogue. When Silas Marner pathetically patches together the pieces of his earthenware pot even though its usefulness has gone, we are shown more vividly than in any other way that his starved soul craves something to love. Clifford's reactions toward the rose and, later, the monkey, in *The House of the Seven Gables*, are a similar instance. So, too, is his blowing soap bubbles.

Character revealed by incident

Actions of any kind may be made telling, particularly actions at a crisis in the character's life. The minister's holding his hand over his heart in *The Scarlet Letter* is significant. It makes little Pearl cry out:

Character revealed by actions

"Mother, he has his hand over his heart! Is it because, when the minister wrote his name in the book, the Black Man set his mark in that place? But why does he not wear it outside his bosom, as thou dost, mother?"

Significant, too, is Nancy's rigid stillness on hearing Godfrey's confession in *Silas Marner:*

"But Nancy sat quite still, only that her eyes dropped and ceased to meet his. She was pale and quiet as a meditative statue, clasping her hands on her lap. . . . He almost expected that she would presently get up and say she would go to her father's. How could she have any mercy for faults that must seem so black to her, with her simple, severe notions? But at last she lifted up her eyes to his again and spoke. There was no indignation in her voice—only deep regret."

Fiction is full of these seemingly insignificant actions which reveal character. Many are the little acts that show the shallow vanity of Hetty in *Adam Bede*, and the mixture of pride, childishness, affection, and loyalty of Alan in *Kidnapped*. In fiction, as in real life, people do significant things.

Character revealed by little touches

Sometimes an author reveals character by a thing so slight that it passes almost unnoticed. It is not without purpose that George Eliot makes the dog retreat under the chair as soon as Dunstan enters the room or that she tells us that even the pins in Nancy's pincushion were arranged in a systematic order from which she allowed no deviation. These little touches often reveal character as truly as long passages of direct analysis.

MOTIVES AND REACTIONS

The motives and reactions of characters

The most significant things about the characterization in a story, however, are the motives and reactions of the characters. *Motives* are the reasons which impel characters to act as they do. *Reactions* are the things they do or say because of these motives. The two greatest flaws possible in the characterization of any story are to make characters act without natural or credible motives and to make them react unnaturally to a situation just to satisfy the demands of the plot. The assigning of motives and the reactions which they cause is called *motivation*.

Motives do not necessarily have to be reasonable—they are not always so in real life—but they must be natural and they must be consistent with what we know of the character. In *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, Penelope's motives in refusing to marry Tom because he loves her instead of her sister are not reasonable, as she herself admits, but they are entirely natural and entirely consistent with Penelope's character. One of the most human stories so far as motivation is concerned is *Bob, Son of Battle.* The motives which impel Adam M'Adam to act as he does throughout the story are conflicting and hard to unravel, but they are in accordance with his character as his past life has molded it. His reactions are often unexpected, baffling, exasperating, but no one could fail to be touched by their human quality. He baffles and irritates and touches one's heart just as many such a warped but intensely pathetic nature does in real life. Skillful examples of motivation are to be found in Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy;* in the minister's spiritual agony in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter;* in the mingled, contradictory impulses of the characters in all of Thackeray's and George Eliot's novels. In romantic fiction, as we have seen, motives are much more simple and elementary than in the realistic novel; in such stories we often find characters animated by a single motive. But romantic fiction has different aims and impulses from the pyschological novel; it must be judged by what it tries to do.

Motivation

Reactions are, of course, the tangible results of motives. In *Henry Esmond*, many motives impel Beatrix to act as she does; her heartless selfishness is the result. In *Vanity Fair* the reactions of Becky Sharp to the various situations in which she finds herself are the result of a complicated network of scheming impulses. In *Adam Bede*, the murder which

Reactions of characters as results of complex motives

Hetty Sorrel finally commits is the inevitable result of a lifetime of selfishness, vanity, and unwillingness to accept responsibility; and the reaction of Dinah to the tragedy of Hetty's life is the result of a lifetime of vastly different motives. In *Romola*, each day of Tito Melema's life is a stage in his moral degradation—an inevitable stage, the bitter lesson of which Romola tenderly points out in her talk with Lillo at the end of the book:

"'It is only a poor sort of happiness that could ever come by caring very much about our own narrow pleasures. We can only have the highest happiness, . . . and this sort of happiness often brings so much pain with it that we can only tell it from pain by its being what we would choose before everything else, because our souls see it is good. There are so many things wrong and difficult in the world that no man can be great . . . unless he gives up thinking much about pleasure or rewards, and gets strength to endure what is hard and painful.' . . . Romola paused for a moment. She had taken Lillo's cheek between her hands, and his young eyes were meeting hers. 'There was a man to whom I was very near so that I could see a great deal of his life, who made almost every one fond of him, for he was young, and clever, and beautiful, and his manners to all were gentle and kind. I believe, when I first knew him, he never thought of anything cruel or base. But because he tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant, and cared for nothing else so much as his own safety he came at last to commit some of the basest deeds—such as make men infamous. He denied his father, and left him to misery; he betrayed every trust that was reposed in him that he might keep himself safe and get rich and prosperous. Yet calamity overtook him.'"

Judging the characterization by the reactions of the characters

In fact it is the reactions of characters at a crisis in the story that best enable us to judge their motives. Many authors are true and unerring in their choice of such reactions; others falter and become inconsistent at the psychological moment. In *The Mill on the Floss*, George Eliot knew better than to make Aunt Glegg turn Maggie Tul-

liver off at the time of her humiliation; in *Silas Marner*, she knew well that Nancy would not leave Godfrey after sixteen years of life with him even though he confessed his past weakness. In *Jane Eyre*, we feel it natural for Jane to leave Rochester when she learns his tragic secret. In *Henry Esmond*, we expect Beatrix to react to her cousin's love as she does. And in *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, we expect the heroic refusal of Silas to stoop to dishonor even at the price of his fortune. Such reactions are illuminating; they reveal at a flash the whole worth of a character. On the other hand, some authors make their characters do and say things at a crisis merely to satisfy the exigencies of the plot. There is a good deal of unnatural hardheartedness in Dickens that all too obviously "points a moral and adorns a tale." In some of Thomas Hardy's novels we feel that the characters occasionally act as they do in order to satisfy the author's pessimism. A study of the motives and reactions of characters in a novel is, therefore, essential for an estimate of the author's power of drawing character.

WHAT TO CONSIDER IN STUDYING SETTING

The setting of any story is its background of time and place. Setting varies in its importance. **Kinds of setting**

Sometimes it is merely scenic, that is, it merely helps us to visualize the scene of the action. Such a setting is usually revealed by casual description and is not of great importance in the study of the story. **Scenic setting**

Sometimes it tries to portray the peculiarities of life in a special part of the world, such as the tropical forests of Brazil, or the fishing settlements of Brittany, or the frozen forests of Canada. Such a setting exercises a great charm over people who are interested in that scene. Numbers of people read stories just because **Strongly localized setting**

they happen to be about Cape Cod, or the French Revolution, or the gold rush to the Yukon, even when the plot and characters are conventional and commonplace.

The essential setting

Some stories have an *essential setting*, that is, they could not be laid elsewhere because in them plot and characters depend for their very existence on the element of time and place. Poe's short story *The Fall of the House of Usher* could not well take place elsewhere. *Ivanhoe* is essentially a story of early Norman and Saxon England. The background of the ocean is necessary to Pierre Loti's *An Iceland Fisherman.* The house itself is an important part of *The House of the Seven Gables*, and a New England Puritan community is the best possible setting for *The Scarlet Letter.*

Influence of setting on plot

We have already seen that setting influences character; it is obvious that it also influences plot. *Cranford* is quite as much a story of Cranford the place as of its people; *Treasure Island* has to take place on a treasure island; *A Tale of Two Cities* has to take place in London and Paris during the French Revolution; *The Cloister and the Hearth* is necessarily a romance of the Middle Ages, and Tommy in *Sentimental Tommy* could not have lived anywhere except in Thrums. In most stories setting plays a part in the development of both plot and character. Very few stories could have taken place anywhere at any time.

Setting may be revealed in various ways. The most common method is by description.

Setting revealed by description

It is customary for an author to describe the scene of the whole story. Sir Walter Scott seldom lets such an opportunity go by without an elaborate description. Other examples of description to reveal setting are the famous picture of the Doone valley in *Lorna Doone;* the short but adequate description of Raveloe in *Silas Marner:*

"orchards looking lazy with neglected plenty; the large church in the wide churchyard, which men gazed at lounging at their own doors in service time; the purple-faced farmers jogging along the lanes or turning in at the Rainbow; homesteads where men supped heavily and slept in the light of the evening hearth, and where women seemed to be laying up a stock of linen for the life to come";

and the charming scenes in the garden in *The House of the Seven Gables:*

a "green play-place of flickering light," where "the bees came and plunged into the squash blossoms," so that "Clifford heard their sunny buzzing murmur in the heart of the great yellow blossoms," and "looked about him with a joyful sense of warmth, and blue sky and green grass, and of God's free air in the whole height from earth to heaven."

Setting may also be revealed by the use of dialect in the dialogue. Thus we have Scotch dialect in *The Little Minister*, *Sentimental Tommy*, and *Bob, Son of Battle;* negro dialect in Thomas Nelson Page's stories of the South; and the New England twang of Silas Lapham and his wife.

Setting revealed by dialogue

Frequently, too, local characters and local customs are emphasized for the purpose of bringing out the setting. *Sentimental Tommy* is rich in such instances. No novel of pronounced local color can get along without its local customs, prejudices, allusions, and characters. Joseph C. Lincoln's popular stories of Cape Cod life are also familiar examples.

Setting revealed by local characters and customs

A common device in historical novels is to introduce historical scenes, characters, and costumes into the story. For this reason we have scenes revolving about the battle of Waterloo in *Vanity Fair;* the grand progresses of Queen Elizabeth in *Kenilworth;* the storming of the Bastille in *A Tale of Two Cities*, and the interchange of courtesies between Saladin

Setting revealed by historical background

and Richard the Lion Hearted in *The Talisman.* For this reason historical characters often appear in a novel though they have no connection with its plot. Thus we have Dick Steele in *Henry Esmond;* Spenser and Raleigh in *Westward Ho!;* and a constant procession of historical figures through the pages of Scott. For this reason, too, Scott describes in detail the costumes of his characters, descriptions which he loved to write, since he was an antiquarian as well as a novelist.

The symbolical setting

Occasionally an author uses symbolism in his setting in order better to bring out the significance of the story. For the young reader the best illustration of this is *The House of the Seven Gables* in which the house, the garden, the chickens, the yellowing branch of the elm tree, Alice's posies, the harpsichord—in fact most of the elements of the setting—have a certain symbolic significance. As symbolism is likely to become vague and confusing, however, it is difficult to use effectively.

Setting and atmosphere

Most authors have a good sense of the fitness of things in choosing certain scenes for certain events. As Stevenson says in his *Gossip on Romance,* "Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck." We feel that a wild night and the Devil's Bowl are the proper time and place for Adam M'Adam to discover Red Wull's guilt in *Bob, Son of Battle.* It is not only appropriate but essential that Dunstan should steal Silas Marner's money on a cold, dark, wet night. The various scenes of David's adventures in *Kidnapped* are just the places for breathless flight and hushed hiding. As we have seen, Sir Walter Scott usually chooses for beginning his stories a place that at once appeals to the imagination. Few authors fail in this choice of appropriate setting; they use time and place and weather to heighten interest.

Many story-tellers use description elaborately throughout a novel. One can follow almost every passing mood in *The House of the Seven Gables* just by reading the descriptions and noting the changes in the weather as things look dark or bright for Hepzibah and Clifford. Stevenson never fails to use description effectively to create mood, and Poe's pictorial power is one of the chief sources of his morbid grip on his reader's imagination. It is a serious mistake to skip the descriptive passages in a book. They portray scenes, reveal character, create suspense, and give atmosphere to the whole story.

Description reflects the mood of the story

WHAT TO CONSIDER IN STUDYING THE THEME OF A STORY

Every story is written with some sort of purpose, even if that purpose be merely to entertain the reader or to make money for the author. If the purpose is to illustrate some idea or theory, to exemplify a moral principle, or to suggest or solve some problem in human relationships, the story is said to have a *theme*. The theme, then, is the underlying idea of a story. Many stories have no themes; they are written merely for entertainment or to indulge the imagination of the author. But many of the more serious works of fiction have a deeper purpose than the mere telling.

The purpose of the story

The theme

A few illustrations will make the matter clear. At first glance, *Ivanhoe* may seem merely to tell a good story which incidentally presents an historical picture. But if one considers it more closely, he will see that the story illustrates the fusion of the Normans and Saxons to make the present Englishman. The reader of *Westward Ho!* cannot fail to see that underlying the exciting story of adventure there is an intense national pride in the growth of the British Empire over land

Illustrations of the purpose behind a story

and sea. *Nicholas Nickleby* is a powerful attack on the brutal treatment of little children in many of the schools of Dickens's day. *Oliver Twist* reveals the sin and misery of the poor of the London of its time and the evil consequences of such sin and misery to society. *Vanity Fair* is a satire on the hypocrisy and shallowness of the polite society of its day. *The Scarlet Letter* illustrates the theory that openly confessed and expiated sin heals, but secret sin eats away the soul. *The House of the Seven Gables* attempts to show that "the act of the passing generation is the seed which produces good or evil fruit in a far distant time." *Silas Marner* is, as George Eliot puts it, "intended to set in a strong light the remedial influences of purely human relationships."

If a book has a theme, it is important for the reader to see how it is illustrated by the story and its characters.

How plot, character, and setting may illustrate theme

In *The House of the Seven Gables*, for instance, we find that the theme—the influence of the past on future generations—is illustrated by plot, character, and setting combined. The original curse of the Maules is shown in operation on the fortunes of the Pyncheons two hundred years later and proved, by the insertion of the story of Alice Pyncheon, to have been in operation at intervals during that time. The character of Judge Pyncheon, with the odd gurgle in his throat and his striking resemblance to his Puritan ancestor, is a sort of type figure of inherited evil stalking throughout the story. And the setting itself, with the legends accumulated about the house, the garden, the well, even the old picture on the wall, is a constant reminder of the imperishable presence of the past. It is worth the student's while to study any other story with an unmistakable theme—*The Scarlet Letter* or *Silas Marner*—to discover how plot, characters, and even setting help to illustrate the underlying idea.

A story, then, may be written merely to entertain, or to indulge the author's fancy, as *Treasure Island;* or it may try merely to show life as it is, as *The Rise of Silas Lapham;* or it may seek to stress local color, as *Kim;* or it may seek primarily to study character influenced by moral laws, as *Romola;* or it may seek to present an historical picture, as *The Cloister and the Hearth;* or it may exemplify a moral principle, as *The Scarlet Letter;* or it may seek to suggest a problem, illustrate a theory, as *Tess of the d'Urbervilles;* or it may seek to call attention to some unfortunate condition in society, as *Oliver Twist;* or it may seek to accomplish a combination of purposes, as most of the books just mentioned do. The student should look behind plot, character, and setting to discover the purpose of the book in order to learn all that it has to tell him.

Summary

WHAT TO CONSIDER IN STUDYING THE TRUTH OF THE STORY

Sometimes people say that a book is "true to life." What does this mean?

What is "true to life"

There are two kinds of truth in story-telling. First there is fidelity to facts. If this is an author's highest ideal of truth, he will not introduce anything into his tale that could not have been experienced in real life. Such a prosaic ideal of what is "true to life" sometimes cripples the imagination and defeats its own end, for nothing is easier to quarrel about than the facts of any given case. People see facts as individuals and interpret them in different ways so that one man's idea of life in a prairie village, for instance, is quite different from another's, even as two members of the same family look upon that family's daily life quite differently. Such a strict adherence to facts is realistic in a narrow sense of the word.

Two kinds of truth in story-telling

Fidelity to facts

But there is also the truth to the essentials of life, that is, to its spirit. The facts of life and the fundamentals of life are different in much the same way that the letter of the law and the spirit of the law are different. For example, the universal human traits, such as greed, love, hate, jealousy, ambition, remorse, and pride, are fundamental traits. Any author can use them as motive forces in his story and remain "true to life." But to give an actual photographic picture of people being greedy, loving, hateful, jealous, proud, ambitious, or remorseful, without going deeper is not necessarily to give a truthful picture of them. For people may be jealous and may act in a given way from quite different motives. A story teller may give us a picture of a man being jealous that is true as an actual record of what he does and says, but if he goes no further into the matter than that, if he does not get into the spirit of the man and make us feel with him and see why he feels as he does, his story is not true to the fundamentals of life. On the other hand, an author might penetrate deeply into the spirit of the scene and yet not make his characters speak and act as people do in real life. Such an author would not be true, always, to the facts of life, but he would be true to the things that lie beneath the facts.

Fidelity to the spirit of life

As we have already seen, the dialogue in *The Scarlet Letter* is not true to the facts of life—that is, it does not represent the way people in real life talk:

The dialogue and the story's truth

"'Hester! Hester Prynne!' said he. 'Is it thou? Art thou in life?'

'Even so!' she answered. 'In such life as has been mine these seven years past! And thou, Arthur Dimmesdale, dost thou yet live?'

. . . . . .

'Hester,' said he, 'hast thou found peace?'

. . . 'Hast thou?' she asked.

'None!—nothing but despair!' he answered. 'What else could I look for, being what I am? Were I an atheist—a man devoid of conscience,—a wretch with coarse and brutal instincts—I might have found peace, long ere now. Nay, I never should have lost it! But as matters stand with my soul, whatever of good capacity there originally was in me, all of God's gifts that were the choicest have become the ministers of spiritual torment. Hester, I am most miserable!'"

Dialogue like this is not the everyday speech of men and women, but what it reveals of the souls of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale is eternally true, so that *The Scarlet Letter* is one of the truest books for its insight into human nature. The same thing is true—though often less beautifully so—in other books. People were never quite so heroic as they are in *Ivanhoe:*

"'Bois-Guilbert, thou knowest not the heart of woman. . . . I tell thee, proud Templar, that not in thy fiercest battles hast thou displayed more of thy vaunted courage than has been shown by woman when called upon to suffer by affection or duty. . . . I am myself a woman . . . yet when we enter those fatal lists, thou to fight, and I to suffer, I feel strong assurance within me that my courage shall mount higher than thine. Farewell, I waste no more words on thee; the time that remains on earth to the daughter of Jacob must be otherwise spent.'"

The language of Rebecca here is theatrical indeed, but the spirit which animates her words is true; and that is the important sort of truth. In *The House of the Seven Gables* Hepzibah does not talk as we think she actually would talk when she says:

"'O, Jaffrey,—Cousin Jaffrey, it is you that are diseased in mind, not Clifford. . . . You are not young, Cousin Jaffrey, no, nor middle-aged,—but already an old man! The hair is white upon your head! How many years have you to live? Are you not rich enough for that little time? . . . Then why should you do this cruel,

cruel thing?—so mad a thing that I know not whether to call it wicked! Alas, Cousin Jaffrey, this hard and grasping spirit has run in our blood these two hundred years. You are but doing over again, in another shape, what your ancestor before you did, and sending down to your posterity the curse inherited from him!'"

but every motive that impels her speech and actions is pathetically true. It was as if she could not find natural, simple words to say what was in her heart. And who can? On the other hand when in *Jane Eyre* Miss Ingram says:

"'We shall now have an abstract of the memoirs of all the governesses extant; in order to avert such a visitation, I again move the introduction of a new topic,'"

it is with difficulty that we repress a snort of incredulity. No one really talked like that, and such inflated style reveals nothing fundamentally true. In a romance, the dialogue may be in the grand style if it is significant. But Miss Ingram's talk is pure affectation. On the other hand, who ever heard people speak in blank verse as they do in Shakespeare? Yet what author has given us truer or more intimate pictures of human nature?

To judge the sum total of the truth of a book, we may ask ourselves the following questions: First, is it true to facts? Are the events and the dialogue a faithful representation of real life? If so, well and good, but if not, let us not condemn the book hastily.

Some criteria of truth in story-telling

There are different kinds of truth. Are the motives and reactions of the characters true? Do we feel that we have here a real picture of real people? If so, we can excuse slips in dialogue and over-romantic occurrences—even the sometimes essential "long arm of coincidence."

Truth in characterization

Then we may ask: Is the moral point of view true? Is

the author giving us a true interpretation of the problems of right and wrong? If he is not, he is giving us the most insidious kind of untruth. We should not care to read *Silas Marner* if Godfrey Cass suffered no consequences whatever for his years of moral cowardice. We should not care to see Hester Prynne growing weaker and Arthur Dimmesdale growing stronger as a result of their course in *The Scarlet Letter.* We feel that the gradual deterioration of Becky Sharp in *Vanity Fair* and the degradation of Tito Melema in *Romola* are morally inevitable.

Truth in ethical vision

Further than this, we should seek to know whether the problems presented in the story are such as would occur to people in real life. Do people in real life seek to evade the consequences of their acts as Godfrey Cass does? Is it fatal to one's mental and spiritual growth to lose contact with human beings as Silas Marner did? Is it true that past generations have their influence on the present as they did in *The House of the Seven Gables?* Is it likely that men of one race could be so wholly blameless and men of another race so wholly wicked as the English and the Spanish in *Westward Ho!?* Is there justification for Tom's uncompromising fidelity to his own principles in *The Mill on the Floss?* Is Silas Lapham's financial sacrifice morally necessary, or is it a piece of Quixotic idealism? Do people in real life meet problems similar to these? Is the solution of them in each book the right solution? If so, the book is true in the problems it presents and in its solution of those problems.

Truth in problems presented

Finally, we may ask if the ideas about life which the characters advance and if the author's own comment on life are true. Is George Eliot's comment on chance a true observation? Do you agree with Hawthorne when he says:

Truth in comment on life

"Nevertheless, if we look through all the heroic fortunes of mankind we shall find this same entanglement of something mean and trivial with whatever is noblest in joy or sorrow. Life is made up of marble and mud"?

Do you agree with Holgrave's views in *The House of the Seven Gables?* What do you think of Dolly Winthrop's answer to Silas's problem of faith in *Silas Marner:*

"'Eh, there's trouble in this world, and there's things we can niver make out the rights on. And all we've got to do is to trusten, Master Marner—to do the right thing as fur as we know and to trusten. For if us as knows so little can see a bit o' good and rights, we may be sure as there's a good and a right bigger nor what we can know'"?

What is wrong with Adam M'Adam's philosophy of life in *Bob, Son of Battle?* What criticism can you make of the Master of Ballantrae's ethics? All these are problems and ideas that must be either truly or falsely presented. To think about them is mental stimulation. A book presents ideas as well as facts, people, and places; these, too, influence its truth.

Summary

A book, then, may be true in its facts, events, and dialogue, and, more subtly, in its ethical vision and in the problems and ideas which it presents. These considerations, with a study of its characterization, determine the extent of its truth to life.

EXERCISES

THE STUDY OF PROSE FICTION

A

Study any novel which you have recently read from the following points of view. Take *A Tale of Two Cities* as the first example.

Exercise 1. THE TITLE

Does the title satisfy the requirements of brevity, originality, euphony, and suggestiveness?

Exercise 2. THE POINT OF VIEW

Is the first, second, or third person used? What is gained by telling the story in this person? What, if anything, is lost? Is the story told in the same person throughout? If not, what is the purpose and what the effect of the change in person?

Exercise 3. THE METHOD OF NARRATION

Is the story told chronologically, or with frequent retrogressions? by detached episodes? by conversation? by letters? by diaries? by a combination of methods? What is gained by the method used? What are its disadvantages?

Exercise 4. THE BEGINNING

Is the beginning both clear and interesting? If not, what is the principal reason for the lack of these qualities? How could the beginning be improved? Is the beginning description, narration, conversation, or exposition? What is the purpose of the method used? Does it accomplish its purpose? Is the beginning too long? Is it irrelevant? Does it strain too noticeably to gain a certain effect?

Exercise 5. THE USE OF DIALOGUE

Is the dialogue realistic or romantic? What effect has it on the verisimilitude of the story? What special qualities has it? Is it brief? Has it long "set speeches"? Does it reveal character? develop the plot? give atmosphere or local color? create suspense? give variety to the book? Is it always to the point—that is, does it always contribute something to plot, character, or setting? Do the characters ever get so interested in their talk that they wander from the story? Has the dialogue any interest in itself? Can you quote some passage of dialogue that has a special value of its own apart from its bearing on the story? What gives this passage its value? Is there variety in the dialogue—is there due attention to facial expression, tone of voice, gestures? Is the dialogue natural, or is it at times insincere, theatrical, unreal? Is it unlike talk such as you are used to hearing and yet true to situation and character? Is it always adapted to the character speaking? Is it specially fitted, at times, to the demands of the story? Are any of the characters easily recognized by certain tricks of expression? If dialect is used, is it necessary and intelligible? Has the dialogue any special quali-

ties such as wit, humor, pathos, poetic feeling, imaginative or emotional power, simplicity, eloquence, spirituality, intelligence, sincerity?

Exercise 6. THE PLOT

What are the main complicating elements of the plot? Are they due chiefly to chance or to character? Is there any undue use of coincidence? Does the story grow out of character? out of setting? Is the plot the chief source of interest? What is the climax or turning point of the plot? What is the dénouement? Is it logical and satisfactory? If not, what prevents it from being so? Is the ending happy? Is it necessarily so? Is the story prolonged unnecessarily after the dénouement? Is the conclusion after the climax rapid or slow? Can you mark by clearly defined stages the progress of the struggle which makes up the plot? Is the struggle moral, physical, mental, or a combination of these? Is it a struggle over circumstances over which the characters have no control? Could it have been avoided if the characters had acted differently? If so, was it natural for them to act as they did, or were their actions merely mainsprings for the plot? How is condensation secured? Can you find striking examples of the inclusion or exclusion of irrelevant material? Are there smooth transitions from one episode to another? Can you find examples of a chain of incidents or episodes that naturally grow out of one another? Are there any weak links in that chain? Is there any example or striking economy or significance in the use of detail? Can you explain how progress is secured by making the reader acquainted with important characters early in the story, by rapidly covering lapses of time not marked by action essential to the plot, by narrative power at important moments? Can you find examples of suspense secured by description? by climax? by surprise? by disguise? by dialogue? by effective chapter endings? by interpolated material? by foreshadowing? by dramatic moments (minor crises)? by withheld information? Does the action quicken towards the climax? If so, how is it quickened? Is the emotional power heightened at the climax? Point out some incidents and some episodes, and explain the difference between the two. Are there incidents which do not directly concern the plot? If so, for what are these used? Which scenes are obligatory? Are there any serious digressions? Point out some minor crises; explain why they are crises and yet not the main climax of the book.

Exercise 7. THE CHARACTERS

Is the purpose of the characters in this book to present interesting people; to bring out the characteristics of some particular place or time; to illustrate a theory; to show the author's view of life; to make a study of human nature; to develop the plot? Explain your answer. Do you like the names of the characters? Are any of them especially appropriate? Are the characters described in formal detail or in vivid flashes? Does the description of them reveal character as well as appearance? Are any of them interesting in themselves? Which ones can you especially visualize? Why? Can you find instances of character revealed by conversation? by actions? by special incidents? by analysis? by little touches? by especially striking reactions? Where does the author's greatest strength in portraying character lie—in drawing men, women, or children? Has the character-drawing any noticeable weaknesses, such as inadequate motivation, exaggeration, sentimentality, a too sudden shift of motives or characteristics to advance the plot? Discuss the motivation. What are the motives of the leading characters? At what points do these motives clash? Do the motives seem to you human and natural in the circumstances? Are they simple, elemental, or complex, mixed? Judging from the motivation, how should you class the story? as a picture of real life? Is the number of characters large or small? Is the range wide or restricted? Which of the characters are static and which kinetic? Do the kinetic characters seem to you to be logically developed? Explain your answer. Are any of the characters idealized? romantic? especially real? Are any of them caricatures? If so, what traits are exaggerated? Do any of the characters appeal especially to your imagination? To what extent does the story grow out of character, that is, to what extent do the characters influence the plot? Which are the principal characters? the subordinate characters? For what purpose are the subordinate characters used? Do any contribute humor? philosophy? information? local color? an impression of numbers essential to reality? Do any of them throw light on other characters? Are any of them so interesting in themselves that they intrude on our interest? Write a brief estimate of the book considered from the point of view of character alone.

Exercise 8. THE SETTING

What is the setting of the story? Is it in any way essential? Is it characterized by strong local color? Has it any special influence

on plot or character? Can you find examples of setting revealed by description? by the occupation, dress, or speech of the characters? by dialogue? by the introduction of historical scenes, places, people, costumes, customs? Are any scenes especially appropriate for the events which occur there? Is there any use of symbolism in setting? Can you find examples of description used to help the reader visualize the scene? to increase suspense? to reveal character? to create atmosphere? to reflect the mood of the story through harmony or contrast? Has the book a distinctive atmosphere? If so, how is it secured? In which scenes is it the strongest? Is the book in any way a study of environment?

Exercise 9. THE STYLE

Has the book a strongly marked style? Do you think you would be able to recognize another book by the same author merely from the style? If so, what qualities of style would especially help you to identify him? Is there much description in the book? If so, is it formal, introduced for its own sake, or incidental to the story? Is the description long or flashed in vividly suggestive phrases? Quote some picture-making passages. Are the descriptions good for choice of details, for choice of words, or for both? Which of them have clearly defined moods? Is the description mostly of people, places, or things? Is any of it highly imaginative or keenly observant? What things does the author notice particularly and bring out in his descriptions? Has the book humor? If so, what special qualities has its humor? Is it exaggerated, robust, quaint, sly, whimsical, absurd, ironical, ridiculous, quiet, witty, sympathetic, shrewd, boisterous, coarse, brilliant, subtle? Is it inherent in persons, in situations, in the author's way of looking at things and of expressing himself? Is it ever tinged with pathos? Has the author power to touch our feelings? Can you give examples of his power to create pity, fear, terror, horror, compassion, awe, resentment, anger in the reader? Does he portray human emotions vividly? If so, which ones does he handle best? Can he create atmosphere? Has he imagination? If so, what kind of imagination is it—fantastic, exalted, brooding, bitter, whimsical, childlike, or what? Is there much author's comment? Is the author objective or subjective in his attitude toward the story—that is, does he intrude himself into it (subjective attitude) or remain aloof (objective attitude)? What do you think of his choice of words? Is his vocabulary wide? Are his

words strong and simple? Does he always use them correctly? Does he use any specially connotative or specific words? Of what sort of words does he seem most fond? Can you find examples of ease, simplicity, and clarity of style? Is the meaning ever vague? Is the style ever unnecessarily heavy? Can you find sentences that seem to you especially forceful and concise? Does the author use much figurative language? If so, what particularly effective figures of speech do you find? Is the style at all poetic? Can you find striking examples of the author's sympathy or sincerity? Is he ever insincere? If so, what seem to you earmarks of his insincerity? Is he ever unduly sentimental? hackneyed? sordid? coarse? Is he fond of irony? of symbolism? Is his point of view romantic or realistic? Is his style suited to his subject matter? Is the style ever theatrical? overdone? To what extent does it reveal his personality? Wherein do you think the chief strength of his style lies?

Exercise 10. THE THEME

Do you think the purpose of the story is to entertain? to show a character? to reveal the author's point of view about life? to illustrate a theory? to exemplify a moral principle? to bring about a reform? to indulge the fancy or the imagination of the author? to present an historical picture? to stress local color? to suggest or to solve a problem? Is it a combination of purposes? State the theme of the book. Show how it is illustrated through plot, character, and setting. Does the author sacrifice any truth in his characterization or any probability in his plot construction in order to emphasize the theme? Has the story any element of propaganda? Has the book any significance apart from its value as a story?

Exercise 11. THE TRUTH OF THE STORY

Does the story seem to you true to life? If so, in what respect? Is its truth fidelity to external facts or to inward ones? Is it true to facts as you know them? Is everything that happens possible and probable? Is the dialogue true to life? Are the problems such as people in real life face? Is the solution of the problems one that would be natural in real life? Can you find examples of author's comment that seem to you especially true? that you could apply to life as you know it? Is the ethical point of view a true one? Do you think the author's ideas of right and wrong false, mistaken, or illogical? Does the book present any difficult moral problem? About which characters does the moral issue center? Does the book

present ideas that are worthy of attention apart from their connection with the story?

B

Exercise 1.

Choose one of the following subjects as a topic for an essay on a novel which you have read recently:

1. A study in environment
2. Our inconsistent human nature
3. How plot, character, and setting interact
4. Problems of human life presented in ——
5. The influence of chance and character on the plot of ——
6. The romantic point of view as illustrated by ——
7. A well-rounded work (the happy blending of plot, character, setting, style, theme, and truth)
8. Two kinds of truth to life (a study of two novels, one a romance, the other a realistic novel)
9. The influence of one human life on another as illustrated by ——
10. The use of subordinate characters in ——
11. Description as a fine art
12. A panorama of (a particular place or period)
13. A bit of propaganda
14. —— as a master of suspense
15. Manner and matter (a study of style and subject matter)
16. A matter of method the point of view and the method of narration)
17. What's in a name? (the author's choice of title and names)
18. Genuine artistic economy
19. Methods of character-portrayal used by —— and ——
20. A question of atmosphere
21. Local color
22. Unreality made real
23. A picture of (some common human trait or condition such as meanness, self-sacrifice, squalor, poverty, extravagance, courage, cowardice, war, patriotism, hypocrisy, integrity)
24. Familiar motives in strange settings
25. A study in character development
26. Some difficult problems in ethics
27. ——'s point of view (a criticism of a character's philosophy of life)

28. The lesson in the life of ——
29. The pathos of the commonplace (or, the poetry, the humor, of the commonplace)
30. The guiding motive (simplicity of motivation)
31. Being your own hero (advantages and disadvantages of the first person)
32. History made real
33. The intangible charm of ——
34. A character that stirs the imagination
35. Life as it appears to ——
36. A study in boys (girls, kings, Indians, pioneers, sea captains, soldiers, pirates, animals)
37. The disadvantages of being a heroine

C

Exercise 1

Discuss the use of subordinate characters as shown by:

a. Gurth, Wamba, and Ulrica in *Ivanhoe*
b. Uncle Venner in *The House of the Seven Gables*
c. The guests at the Red House in *Silas Marner*
d. Hayraddin in *Quentin Durward*
e. The Dodson sisters in *The Mill on the Floss*
f. Blanche Ingram in *Jane Eyre*
g. Mrs. Jameson in *Cranford*
h. Zerrilla in *The Rise of Silas Lapham*
i. Dick Steele in *Henry Esmond*
j. Mackellar in *The Master of Ballantrae*
k. Cluny in *Kidnapped*
l. Michael Lambourne in *Kenilworth*

Exercise 2

Find different ways of revealing character in one of the following novels:

1. *Adam Bede*
2. *Quentin Durward*
3. *Great Expectations*
4. *The Marble Faun*
5. *Tom Sawyer*
6. *Kidnapped*
7. *The Heart of Midlothian*
8. *The Mill on the Floss*
9. *The Rise of Silas Lapham*
10. *Bob, Son of Battle*
11. *Henry Esmond*
12. *Vanity Fair*

Exercise 3

Point out different ways of securing suspense used in one of the following novels:

1. *The Three Musketeers*
2. *Bob, Son of Battle*
3. *Oliver Twist*
4. *Jane Eyre*
5. *The Talisman*
6. *The Black Tulip*
7. *Huckleberry Finn*
8. *Ivanhoe*

Exercise 4

Point out obligatory scenes in one of the following:

1. *Adam Bede*
2. *Lorna Doone*
3. *Kidnapped*
4. *Bob, Son of Battle*
5. *The Master of Ballantrae*
6. *Sentimental Tommy*
7. *The Talisman*
8. *Great Expectations*

Exercise 5

In the following novels point out some events which take place in strikingly appropriate settings:

1. *Ivanhoe*
2. *Jane Eyre*
3. *Westward Ho!*
4. *Tom Sawyer*
5. *The Last Days of Pompeii*
6. *The Scarlet Letter*
7. *Treasure Island*
8. *Sentimental Tommy*

Exercise 6

Discuss the importance of the setting in one of the following:

1. *Sentimental Tommy*
2. *The Cloister and the Hearth*
3. *Kidnapped*
4. *Westward Ho!*
5. *Kim*
6. *Oliver Twist*
7. *The House of the Seven Gables*
8. *The Little Minister*
9. *Nicholas Nickleby*
10. *The Scarlet Letter*
11. *Henry Esmond*
12. *Cranford*
13. *The Marble Faun*
14. *A Tale of Two Cities*

Exercise 7

Discuss the use of chance and coincidence in one of the following:

1. *Silas Marner*
2. *Oliver Twist*
3. *Great Expectations*
4. *Westward Ho!*
5. *The Count of Monte Cristo*
6. *The Cloister and the Hearth*
7. *The Three Musketeers*
8. *The Talisman*

Exercise 8

Show how several stories are blended into one in one of the following:

1. *Ivanhoe*
2. *Oliver Twist*
3. *Quentin Durward*
4. *The Talisman*
5. *Silas Marner*

Exercise 9

Discuss the uses of description in one of the following:

1. *Bob, Son of Battle*
2. *Ivanhoe*
3. *Silas Marner*
4. *David Copperfield*
5. *A Tale of Two Cities*
6. *Jane Eyre*
7. *The House of the Seven Gables*
8. *Kim*

Exercise 10

What universal human problems, especially moral problems, are presented in:

1. *Adam Bede*
2. *Romola*
3. *Vanity Fair*
4. *Henry Esmond*
5. *The Scarlet Letter*

Exercise 11

What is the theme of each of the following? How does the story illustrate the theme?

1. *The House of the Seven Gables*
2. *John Halifax, Gentleman*
3. *The Scarlet Letter*
4. *A Christmas Carol*
5. *Romola*
6. *Vanity Fair*
7. *Adam Bede*

Exercise 12

What traces of propaganda do you find in:

1. *Nicholas Nickleby* 2. *Oliver Twist* 3. *Westward Ho!*

Exercise 13

Consider the beginning of one of the following:

1. *Ivanhoe*
2. *Kenilworth*
3. *Kidnapped*
4. *Silas Marner*
5. *Treasure Island*
6. *Bob, Son of Battle*
7. *A Tale of Two Cities*
8. *The Scarlet Letter*
9. *The House of the Seven Gables*
10. *The Rise of Silas Lapham*

What is the method employed? What is its purpose? its effect? How are antecedent facts made clear, situation and character presented, and interest aroused?

Exercise 14

Consider the ending of one of the following:

1. *Kidnapped*
2. *The Mill on the Floss*
3. *The Rise of Silas Lapham*
4. *The Cloister and the Hearth*
5. *The House of the Seven Gables*
6. *Pride and Prejudice*
7. *A Tale of Two Cities*
8. *Vanity Fair*
9. *Henry Esmond*
10. *Lorna Doone*
11. *Oliver Twist*
12. *The Scarlet Letter*
13. *The Marble Faun*
14. *Kenilworth*

To what extent is the ending satisfactory, logical, definite, inevitable, dramatically effective? What weaknesses has it? If it is happy, state whether or not it is logical. If it is unhappy, state whether or not it seems to you inevitable.

Exercise 15

Comment on the purposeful use of weather in one of the following:

1. *The House of the Seven Gables*
2. *David Copperfield*
3. *The Master of Ballantrae*
4. *The Mill on the Floss*
5. *Jane Eyre*
6. *Silas Marner*
7. *Kidnapped*
8. *Bob, Son of Battle*

Exercise 16

Compare and contrast the distribution of rewards and punishments in a novel by Dickens, one by George Eliot, and one by Thackeray. Which seems to you most true to life? In which is the ethical vision most clear?

Exercise 17

Who is your favorite contemporary novelist? Analyze the sources of your interest in his work. Wherein does he measure up to or fall short of the artistic criteria for prose fiction? Do any of his novels illustrate strikingly the principles explained in Chapter IV?

Exercise 18

Discuss the appeal of the following characters. How do they illustrate the romantic or the realistic point of view? What are their guiding motives and significant reactions? Are they static or kinetic? Why do they appeal to the imagination?

1. Brian de Bois Guilbert
2. The Master of Ballantrae
3. Adam M'Adam
4. Maggie and Tom Tulliver
5. Sentimental Tommy
6. Meg Merrilies
7. Mr. Micawber
8. Uriah Heep
9. Robin Hood
10. Tom Sawyer
11. Scrooge
12. Thomas Gradgrind
13. Betsy Trotwood
14. Dinah Morris
15. Mrs. Poyser
16. D'Artagnan
17. Alan Breck
18. Sidney Carton
19. Becky Sharp
20. Sairey Gamp
21. Fagin
22. John Ridd
23. Rosa Dartle
24. Lorna Doone
25. John Silver
26. Jeanie Deans
27. Beatrix Esmond
28. Elizabeth Bennett
29. Romola
30. Aunt Glegg
31. Jane Eyre
32. Rebecca
33. Heathcliff
34. Phœbe Pyncheon

D

Certain phrases are likely to be misused by the beginner in criticizing books. These phrases are entirely proper in the right place, but are useless if misapplied. Try to find words that express exactly what you mean; do not use these phrases unless they accurately express your meaning.

1. *dry* This is a word best avoided in the criticism of books. A book which you do not like, which you find dull, which did not hold your attention, you should not condemn with one sweeping gesture as "dry."
2. *very* Frequently this word is used in such a careless way that it means nothing. Do not couple it with superlative expressions, such as fascinating, wonderful, thrilling, exciting.
3. *interesting* This word, proper in itself, has become hackneyed. It has thus lost its force. Find in the

dictionary adjectives that express accurately different degrees of interest.

4. *true to life* Do not overuse this phrase. Be sure, when you do use it, that you use it correctly, stating clearly in what respects the book is lifelike. The discussion in Chapter IV will help you here.

5. *wonderful* This is a strong word. It is best reserved for things bordering on the miraculous.

6. *clever* Look this word up in the dictionary. It had better not be used except for extraordinary ingenuity of plot construction, successful originality of method, or brilliancy of expression. Do not refer to studies of human nature, profundity of thought, beauty of expression, or depth of feeling as "clever."

7. *realistic* This word is best used as an antonym for *romantic*. It indicates a point of view toward life, not mere fidelity to facts. See the distinction explained in Chapter IV.

8. *weird* This word is all right if used correctly. Look it up in the dictionary to discover its true meaning. It should not be used carelessly to indicate any vague feeling of excitement, or apprehension, or suspense.

9. *fascinating* This, like *wonderful*, is a strong word. If you are actually held spellbound by a story or a character you may refer to it as *fascinating*. Do not, however, use the word to indicate merely strong interest.

10. *mysterious* This word is somewhat akin to *weird*. Do not use it to indicate mere excitement, interest, or suspense. Use it when you mean the unexplained or the unexplainable.

11. *exciting* Use this when you really mean excitement. It is not a synonym for interesting, mysterious, or unusual.

12. *humorous* Notice the spelling. Apply this to only those things that possess humor, not those that are merely unusual, amusing, or ironical.

13. *typical* Beware of this word. Do not use it of characters or incidents unless they are clearly representative

of their kind. Most great characters in fiction are strongly individualized, not merely typical. Becky Sharp is herself, not a type of the adventuress. Jane Eyre is herself, not a type of the governess. Dickens's great characters are too strongly accentuated to be "typical."

14. *add color* Avoid this phrase unless you are sure that you use it appropriately to refer to things that give warmth, brightness, or animation to a book. Becky Sharp's schemings, subterfuges, and hypocrisies do not "add color" to *Vanity Fair.*

15. *took the part of* This phrase is properly applicable to actors on the stage. An actor takes the part of Hamlet, for instance. The phrase should not be applied to characters in a book.

16. *splendid* This word applies to something of glittering brilliance or magnificence. It should not be applied to the sober things of life, however noble they may be. Dobbin in *Vanity Fair*, for instance, is not a "splendid man."

17. *ideal* This word should be reserved for things that are perfect of their kind; things that have reached a perfection fulfilling your highest aspirations.

18. *noble* This is another strong word, to be used carefully and sparingly. Use it only when you wish to indicate genuine nobility.

19. *at that time; in those days; in the olden times* Never use these expressions unless you are sure that it is clear to the reader exactly what time you mean by them.

20. *in this way; of this kind; in this manner; thus; this; these* These, too, should be definite expressions. Never use them vaguely.

21. *description* This word should be applied only to a mental picture of how things look. Never confuse it with analysis, exposition, or narration. Not everything that is not conversation is necessarily description.

22. *romantic* This word is the antonym of *realistic;* it does not mean sentimental or love-lorn.

23. because This conjunction is a causal connective. It precedes a reason given for something. Do not use it unless you are giving actual causes or reasons.

24. imaginary Do not confuse this word with *imaginative*. Imaginary means created by the imagination; it does not mean having the power to imagine. An imaginary character is one that exists only in the imagination, not one that is gifted with the power of creating mental images for himself.

CHAPTER V

DRAMA

WHAT THE DRAMA IS

There is an old saying to the effect that no man has ever lived so deficient in imagination that he did not at some time in his career write a play. Like most old sayings this indicates a general condition of affairs rather than states an actual fact, but there is this much truth in it: it is instinctive in men to like to act out stories themselves, and, when they have not the ability or opportunity to do this, to like to see stories acted out by others with real characters in action before their eyes. Hence the universal popularity of amateur theatricals, of the so-called legitimate drama, and of the more recent dramatic form, the moving picture. To see a play is, and always will be, an almost instinctive form of recreation for mankind.

The dramatic instinct in man

The drama, then, is that form of literature which seeks to tell a story by setting actual characters in action. As it is a form that is meant to be seen and heard rather than read, however, it is peculiarly susceptible to the spirit of the times in which it exists, and more than ordinarily difficult to read and to write. It is with some of these difficulties that this chapter is to deal.

The nature of the drama

WHY THE DRAMA IS DIFFICULT TO READ

The drama is difficult to read, not because it is hard to understand, but because it is meant to be, not read, but

Drama meant to be acted

acted. Of late years it has been possible to buy contemporary plays in book form, but these plays are published, usually, as a result of their successful performance on the stage. Their authors did not, in most cases, orginally intend them to be read. Indeed it is doubtful that the master dramatist, Shakespeare, ever seriously considered selling his plays for publication; it was not until after his death that an authentic collection of his plays—the famous folio of 1623—was printed. The average dramatist writes his play in the hope that it will be publicly presented on a metropolitan stage.

Drama must be read imaginatively

Since a play is written to be seen and heard, it must be read with the imagination constantly alert to visualize the action. Most dramatic authors do not put in elaborate enough stage directions to make either the actions and appearance of their characters or the stage setting of their scenes very vivid to the reader. A few, it is true, have lavished loving care and genuine literary genius upon the comment that accompanies the dialogue of their plays, but these few are conspicuous exceptions. One may read Barrie's *Quality Street* or *What Every Woman Knows* or *Half Hours* with as much delight as one read his novels, but most dramatists have not his gift for interpretative comment. A play that, when well acted, is most gripping may not, when read, arouse one's feelings at all. Augustus Thomas's *The Copperhead*, for example, which is intensely moving on the stage, loses much of its emotional appeal in the reading. Clyde Fitch's *Beau Brummel* needs the aid of actors and actresses if it is to be appreciated at its full dramatic value. Much of the satiric humor of Kaufman and Connelly's *Dulcy* is lost on the casual reader, although it is quite obvious to an audience in the theater. Even contemporary plays of genuine literary worth, often written with a view to publication, such as Drinkwater's

Abraham Lincoln and Galsworthy's *The Silver Box* have to be read without the aid of elaborated stage directions. And in reading Shakespeare one has to be on the watch for stage directions implied in the text if one is to visualize the action.

The necessity of reading drama imaginatively is easily seen in *Macbeth*. The night of Duncan's murder is not described to us in stage directions, but the talk of Banquo and Fleance creates for us the impression of blackness and silence and the vague forebodings of evil in Banquo's mind:

Visualizing the night of Duncan's murder

"*Banquo.* How goes the night, boy?
Fleance. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.
Banquo. And she goes down at twelve.
Fleance. I take 't, 'tis later, sir.
Banquo. *Hold, take my sword.* There's husbandry in heaven,
Their candles are all out . . .
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep."

Julius Cæsar is full of such instances of stage directions implied in the text. "I hear a tongue," shudders Cæsar, "shriller than all the music," and by that little sentence the piercing cry of the Soothsayer is described for us; but when we read the play we might not notice this. The picture of Cæsar's train returning from the games is given us by the wondering comment of Brutus:

Reading *Julius Cæsar* with the imagination alert for details of sound

Details of stage picture

"But, look you, Cassius,
The angry spot doth glow on Cæsar's brow,
And all the rest look like a chidden train;
Calpurnia's cheek is pale, and Cicero
Looks with such ferret and such fiery eyes
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being cross'd in conference by some senators."

This is an illuminating bit of comment for a stage manager, but its pictorial value might be lost on the careless reader.

Details of dramatic gesture

Antony's dramatic gesture when he tears aside the garment covering the corpse of Cæsar is not described for us; we must imagine it for ourselves from his words:

> "Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold
> Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? *Look you here,*
> *Here is himself*, marr'd, as you see, with traitors."

and from the words of the bystanders:

> "First Citizen: O piteous spectacle!
> Second Citizen: O noble Cæsar!
> Third Citizen: O woful day!"

And such a scene as the madness of the mob, which is so thrilling on the stage, cannot be realized in reading except by the deliberate effort of the imagination.

Visualizing details of action

Later in the play, in the tent scene, Brutus, the gentle, considerate scholar, is revealed more in the lines that suggest his actions than in any other way:

> "Look Lucius, here's the book I sought for so.
> I put it in the pocket of my gown."

> "If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument;
> I'll take it from thee."

> "Let me see, let me see; is not the leaf turn'd down
> Where I left reading?"

This visualizing of the stage picture is also essential in reading contemporary plays. If you have seen John Barrymore in the moving picture based on Clyde Fitch's *Beau Brummell* the reading of the play will be more interesting because you have seen the costumes, the byplay of facial expression, the essential pantomime which all serve to make

the Beau's character real to you. When you read *The Copperhead*, you must imagine the sounds and sights at the close of Act I when the Union soldiers march away with Joey Shanks among them; otherwise this scene loses much of its thrill. The reader of Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* misses the harrowing effect of the constantly beating tom-toms, so important a part of the acted play. Sutton Vane's *Outward Bound* is engrossing to read; to see it acted is an emotional experience. On the stage these things can be actually seen and heard, but if they are to be real to us as we read the play, we must constantly think of the actions that go with the words. In this way the reading of a play demands constant use of the imagination.

WHY THE DRAMA IS DIFFICULT TO WRITE

Of all the forms of literature a play is the most difficult to write well. This is not entirely because its story must be condensed into a few acts and told largely by dialogue; the difficulty is due also in no small measure to the many artificial requirements which have to be satisfied before a play can be presented. A novelist or an essayist or a poet has really only himself to please; if he writes for the thrill of creating a work of art and not from commercial motives, he can write according to his conception of art; he need not bother about what other people think. But a playwright has to bother about what other people think. As we have seen, plays are written to be acted. A playwright, therefore, must convince managers of acting companies that his plays will act well. The main object of a manager is necessarily to make a play financially successful. Each manager has his own ideas of what a play should be; he may not be indifferent to the demands of art, but he may have a

Writers of drama hampered by many practical considerations

The playwright must consider the producer's point of view

different artistic idea from that of the author. Accordingly, although he has accepted the play, he may ask that it be changed here and there to conform to his own standards. It is no uncommon thing for a play to be entirely rewritten after a few trial performances. A good play must satisfy the demands of the theater; and those demands usually are interpreted by a manager with experience in producing plays. Surely a play that is not suitable for theatrical performance is lacking in the first requirement of the drama. Shakespeare was himself a manager as well as a dramatist; thus he had the actual theatrical experience which made it possible for him to adapt his stories to performance on the stage.

The playwright must consider the player's point of view

In the second place, the dramatist has to consider the actors and actresses who are to give life to the characters he has created. This is not a simple matter. Even after suitable players are found—sometimes a difficult task—there remains the difficulty of squaring the actor's conception of a part with the conception of the playwright. Not all playwrights are able to say of an actor what Rostand said of Coquelin, the "creator" of his *Cyrano de Bergerac:* "C'est à l'âme de Cyrano que je voulais dédier ce poème. Mais puisqu'elle a passé en vous, Coquelin, c'est à vous que je le dédie." [1]

The actor is a creative artist, too, and it is right that his ideas and abilities should be considered. The actor is almost as much a creator of a character as the playwright who first conceived it. A sincere and intelligent actor gives life to the playwright's original conception, but the caprice or peculiar genius of a particular actor may force the playwright to change a part, even the whole play. Thus the famous *Habañera* song of the opera *Carmen* is the result of

[1] I meant to dedicate this poem to the soul of Cyrano. But since that has slipped into you, Coquelin, it is to you that I dedicate it.

repeated attempts to please the prima donna who "created" the rôle. Richard Mansfield, the actor, is perhaps quite as responsible for our vivid conception of Beau Brummell as Clyde Fitch the playwright. Rachel Crothers's play *Nice People* was made human, even significant, by the acting of Francine Larrimore. Augustus Thomas, the author of *The Copperhead*, would be the first to admit that the character of Milt Shanks owed much of its human appeal to the actor, Lionel Barrymore. Many parts are forever identified with certain great actors and actresses. We think of Barrie's Peter Pan and Maggie Shand as Maude Adams; of Maeterlinck's Mélisande as Mary Garden; of O'Neill's Anna Christie as Pauline Lord; of Merton of the Movies as Glenn Hunter. An older generation of playgoers identified Hamlet with Edwin Booth, Juliet with Adelaide Neilson, Rosalind with Ada Rehan. And to-day many of us identify Hamlet with John Barrymore, Othello with Walter Hampden, Juliet with Jane Cowl, Shylock with E. H. Sothern, Portia with Julia Marlowe, Macbeth and King Lear with Robert Mantell.

How Shakespeare's plays illustrate the influence of the actor

Shakespeare probably calls Hamlet "fat and scant of breath" because the actor who first performed the part, presumably Richard Burbage, was physically heavy. Undoubtedly some of his greatest characters were first imagined with a certain player in mind, perhaps with that player's active coöperation. It is likely that some of the scenes given to clowns and jesters and fools, especially in places where the play could very well get along without them, were written because the audience demanded a part for a popular comedian. Something of the distaste of the creative genius for this truckling to the vanity of popular favorites appears in Hamlet's famous speech to the players:

"Overstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at first and now,

was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature. . . . Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve. . . . O, there be players that I have seen play—and heard others praise, and that highly—not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they strutted so abominably. . . . And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it."

This would indicate that supplying parts for a popular stock company irked Shakespeare, but the actors were there and parts had to be supplied them. And if these Launcelot Gobbos and Peters and Porters sometimes seem a bit tedious to us to-day, we must remember that we cannot see the droll creature who originally made them funny. Three hundred years hence Charlie Chaplin can be seen by future generations; Launcelot Gobbo we cannot see. It would be interesting to know what actor helped to suggest the creation of Falstaff, what young boy first created Portia or Viola or Rosalind, but that particular source of the greatness of Shakespeare's plays is lost to us. We can be reasonably sure, however, that these great characters owe a part of their existence to some player whose name has been long since forgotten. Since Shakespeare was himself an actor, he knew the necessity of considering the actor's as well as the dramatist's point of view.

In the third place, the dramatist must consider his audience. No manager cares to spend time and money on a play which is not likely to meet with public favor. A play requires an audience; therefore the dramatist cannot afford to be indifferent to public opinion. This does not

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

"Portia," by Sir John Millais

The dramatist has to consider the actors and actresses who are to give life to the characters he has created.

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KING HENRY V

Ready for a performance of *King Henry V* at Stratford-on-Avon at the Shakespeare Memorial Theater.

mean that he should consider the cheap taste of the shallow part of an audience; on the other hand, he should not ignore the legitimate arts of the theater which attract public attention. To make a play both a work of art and a theatrically effective performance requires great skill. It is not, however, an impossible task. Recent thoroughly intelligent productions of *Hamlet*, of *Romeo and Juliet*, of *The Merchant of Venice*, of *The School for Scandal*, of Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*, of O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*, and *Anna Christie*, of Molnar's *Liliom*, of Vane's *Outward Bound*, and the prosperous existence of excellent companies [1] in Shakespearean repertoire prove that one can give the best and yet be financially successful. The dramatist should be sufficiently alive to public opinion to foster the taste of that part of the public which enjoys all that is best in the theater.

The playwright must consider the point of view of the audience

There is evidence that Shakespeare was continually on the alert to give his audience what it liked. Thus he sometimes has whole scenes given over to processions and "dumb shows," noise and music, and exhibitions of physical skill, all things which the Elizabethans loved. *Julius Cæsar* opens with a disorderly mob, probably led in the original production by a popular comedian of the Globe Theater. In *As You Like It* there is a wrestling match at the very start, and frequent processions of foresters and rousing songs which lead Jaques to say, " 'tis no matter how it be in tune, so it make noise enough." In *Twelfth Night* there is plenty of roistering supplied by Sir Toby, who doubtless expressed the sentiments of the great majority of the audience at the Globe Theater, and of good Queen Bess herself, when he bellowed at the puritanical Malvolio:

Shakespeare and his audience

[1] John Barrymore, 1923–4; Jane Cowl, 1923–4; Sothern & Marlowe; Robert B. Mantell; Walter Hampden; David Warfield, 1923; James K. Hackett, 1924.

"Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?"

Nor is Sir Toby the only source of rough and tumble amusement in the play. There is more than enough low comedy supplied by the foolish knight Sir Andrew Aguecheek, whose shallow vanity is no shallower than his own silly brain. He consoles himself for his many deficiencies with the thought that his leg

"does indifferent well in a flame color'd stock,"

and remarks with some complacency,

"I knew it was I, for many do call me fool,"

and again,

"'Tis not the first time I have constrained one to call me knave."

And for good measure are thrown in Maria, the

"most excellent devil of wit,"

and the versatile Feste who turns readily from easy punning with Viola to singing wistful songs for the lovesick Orsino, songs that

"dally with the innocence of love."

In *Hamlet* and in *Macbeth* there are duels and noise, "alarums and excursions," for Shakespeare knew that his audience demanded those things; his skill lay in working them into his stories so that they helped rather than hindered. He considered his audience, giving them what they wanted without letting this consideration interfere with the development of his own ideas.

The influence of the actor may be studied with special profit in moving pictures where the player and not the play is "the thing." Moving picture audiences know the characters of literature almost wholly as they are portrayed by popular actors and actresses. Moving pictures would, then, furnish an introduction to literature if so much freedom were not taken with the texts. Scenario writers, however, feel at liberty to change any story to suit the demands of their public. Works of literature are transferred to the screen artistically but not faithfully. Douglas Fairbanks's productions of *The Three Musketeers*, *Robin Hood*, and *The Thief of Bagdad* were notable achievements; nevertheless this was not the Robin Hood of legend or literature; this was not so much the D'Artagnan of Dumas as the vital creation of the actor's buoyant personality. *Lorna Doone* on the screen presented a lovely Lorna and a handsome John Ridd, but little of Richard Blackmore, who as the author of the book, created them. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* will remain in the memories of all who shuddered over Quasimodo as played by Lon Chaney, but it is the actor and not the author who dominates the picture. People go to moving pictures to see popular actors, not to judge the merits of their vehicles. It is small wonder that Rudolph Valentino complains that his personal popularity encroaches on his artistic aspirations. Too many of his public care nothing about his art or any art.

This magic power possessed by a few actors might well be used to bring into many lives an appreciation of all literature, and all beauty. At present, however, Mary Pickford devotes her gifts to hackneyed stories like *Rosita*, borrowed from a worn-out opera libretto, and *Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall*, the original of which was a third-rate historical novel. Alla Nazimova, an actress of undeniable talent, presents a beautiful but bizarre version of Oscar

Wilde's *Salome*, which is scarcely worth the effort and time expended on it. Certain moving picture directors with flashes of genius sometimes rise to a high level and seldom sink far below it, but they do not often devote themselves to worthy material. With a world of great literature behind them and all life before them, with a new artistic medium and a thorough knowledge of its use, moving pictures need only the guiding enthusiasms of a new Elizabethan age to start them on a glorious career. Doubtless there are great difficulties in the way of practical realization of an artistic ideal which depends for its success on public support, difficulties not unlike those which confronted Shakespeare and his associates three hundred years ago.

The playwright must consider the limitations of his theater

Lastly, a dramatist is bound by the artificial limitations of his stage. On the modern stage, it is true, wonders of scenic effects can be accomplished; thunder roars and lightning flashes; cyclones sweep across the stage demolishing everything in sight, or hurling drifts of sand upon the unfortunate actors; heavy fogs cling to barges along the river making the audience shiver with fancied dampness; morning dawns mysteriously and beautifully in Canadian forests; tropical rain descends in a heavy, monotonous drizzle. Even with these possibilities there are limitations; some things cannot be attempted on the stage; then, too, there is the danger of overburdening a play with too many scenic effects, too many mechanical wonders, which distract attention from the play itself. A dramatist should confine his scenes and events to things that can be convincingly suggested on the stage unless he is to defeat his own ends. And if his stage, like Shakespeare's, is limited in scenery and in scenic possibilities, he must write his play with these limitations in mind.

The limitations of the Elizabethan stage were many.

The stage projected a considerable distance into the amphitheater which surrounded it; there were no "wings" and no curtain; entrances had to be made from the rear of the platform, and exits were a matter of walking off without ceremony. It is interesting to see how Shakespeare adapted his plays to these difficulties. The entrance of an actor from the rear of the stage and his advance to its projecting "apron" might easily be awkward. For this reason Shakespeare often had his characters on the stage speak of those who were entering, as for instance, Brutus calls the attention of Cassius to the approach of Cæsar in the passage quoted above. Shakespeare took advantage of this practical difficulty using it as a means of introducing his characters to the audience. As there were no programs then, the audience had to learn from the dialogue who the characters were. Hence Shakespeare made use of lines like these as his characters approached the stage:

The influence of the Elizabethan theater on Shakespeare's plays

How Shakespeare made use of the difficulties of entrance

"Yonder comes my master, your brother;"
"Hath not Fortune sent in this fool to cut off the argument?"
"Here comes Monsieur Le Beau;"
"Look you, who comes here: a young man and old in solemn talk."
"There is, sure, another flood toward, and these couples are coming to the ark;"
"But soft! but soft! aside! here comes the King;
The queen, the courtiers; who is it that they follow?
And with such maim'd rites?"

Sometimes these introductory comments are given with great dramatic effect as in Iago's soliloquy as Othello approaches:

"Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday."

Difficulties caused by lack of a curtain

The fact that there was no curtain made it difficult to bring acts to a stirring climax. The modern dramatist rings down the curtain at the critical moment; the Elizabethan dramatist had to make his actors walk off the stage. But in his later plays Shakespeare made his scenes end effectively in spite of this difficulty. His most common methods were to leave the issue in suspense at the end of a scene, or to work up to a certain emotional pitch and end on just the right note to emphasize this pitch. Thus the first scene of Act II in *Macbeth* ends with suspense. A bell sounds softly, the signal for Macbeth to murder the sleeping king. His shuddering whisper closes the scene:

> "I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
> Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
> That summons thee to heaven or to hell."

The balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet,* on the other hand, alive with the rapture and wonder of young love, sustains its mood perfectly through the last word. Had Shakespeare had all the resources of the modern stage, he could have contrived no more natural or beautiful ending:

Jul. I have forgot why I did call thee back.
Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it.
Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Rememb'ring how I love thy company.
Rom. And I'll stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.
Jul. 'Tis almost morning, I would have thee gone;—
And yet no farther than a wanton's bird;
That lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silken thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.
Rom. I would I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet, so would I;
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good-night, good-night! Parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good-night till it be morrow.
[*Exit, above.*]

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!

If, however, there were dead men on the stage (as there frequently were in Elizabethan drama) the absence of a curtain made it necessary to call in some one to help remove the corpses. Thus at the end of *Hamlet*, Fortinbras and his army appear to bear off in solemn procession the somewhat numerous dead with whom the stage is strewn.

But the lack of a curtain was not the only difficulty. The Elizabethan stage, though not so bare of scenery as has been generally supposed, was not equipped with the elaborate devices that we have to-day for the emphasis of the setting. Moreover, the performances took place in the afternoon, practically in the open air. Since the setting was not a matter of drop curtains and electrical effects, descriptive poetry had to create an imaginative picture of the needed setting. The atmosphere of the scene had to be created by the words of the author. This made it necessary for Shakespeare to develop his gift of poetic imagination.

Difficulties caused by lack of much scenic equipment

Some of the most beautiful poetry in our language we owe to this artificial limitation of the stage. Examples are numerous: the garden scenes, the farewell scene and the tomb scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, the moonlit garden in *The Merchant of Venice*, the pictures of gloom and horror created by Macbeth's tortured imagination, the description of Cleopatra's barge in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the constantly repeated accounts of the storm in *Julius Cæsar*, the description of Dover Cliffs in *King Lear*. In less detailed touches Shakespeare's practical stage-craft takes care to

remind his audience of time and place. The plays are filled with such reminders:

"Yon grey lines that fret the clouds are messengers of day";
"The deep of night is crept upon our talk";
"How ill this taper burns!";
"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!";
"Night's candles are burnt out and jocund Day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops";
"'tis bitter cold
And I am sick at heart";
"But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill";
"The air bites shrewdly";
"The pelting of this pitiless storm";
"Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!";
"Light thickens and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood";
"Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn";
"in the shade of these melancholy boughs."

The dramatist, then, has to consider in writing his plays the requirements and the limitations of his stage. He must also consider the tastes and abilities of actors and managers and the tastes of his audience. These are the general difficulties to be faced by the playwright.

Summary

A FEW GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DRAMATIC CONSTRUCTION

Different Kinds of Drama

The two most fundamental divisions of the drama are *comedy* and *tragedy*. If the leading character eventually overcomes the obstacles with which he is striving, the play is called a comedy; if, on the other hand, he is overcome by the obstacles, the play is called a tragedy. Thus *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, and *A Midsummer Night's*

The drama classified

Comedy and tragedy

Dream are comedies; *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Julius Cæsar* are tragedies.

A play may, however, have both comic and tragic elements. The hero may lose his struggle but may have gained something in losing it; or the happiness of the leading characters may be overshadowed by the unhappiness of some other character or characters who have aroused the sympathy of the audience. Thus in *The Merchant of Venice* the happiness of the leading characters is overshadowed by the unhappiness of Shylock. In Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* the hero gains by losing. A play which thus combines tragic and comic elements may be called a *tragi-comedy*. **Tragi-comedy**

If a comedy is so excessively comic that the leading characters are struggling against absurd and undignified odds, it is called a *farce*. Difficulties arising from mistaken identity like those in *A Comedy of Errors* are usually farcical. When characters are animated by ridiculous motives or blocked by inconsequential trifles, the play is likely to be a farce. *The Taming of the Shrew* with its absurd exaggeration of Katherina's bad temper and the extreme measures taken by Petruchio to overcome it, is really a farce-comedy. In Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* the chief obstacles in the course of true love are a young lady's unwillingness to marry any one whose name is not Ernest and the inability of her suitor to produce any ancestors or antecedents other than the handbag in which he was orginally found at a railway station. Such absurd complications make the play a farce. **Farce-comedy**

A *melodrama* is a play, usually with a happy ending, in which the interest centers in the exciting and unusual things that happen fast and mysteriously. The characters are likely to be "stock figures"—that is, types rather than strongly marked individualities—moved by elementary motives. The good people in such a play **Melodrama**

are very good and very brave, qualities which they need if they are to survive the dangers into which they are plunged for no plausible reason except to provide another thrill for the audience. The bad people are very bad, with no redeeming feature unless tenacity of purpose may be so called. A melodrama is not to be judged too seriously. If it supplies harmless entertainment like *The Cat and the Canary*, for instance, its purpose is achieved. The plot of *Hamlet* as it originally existed is melodramatic, but Shakespeare transformed the leading character from a figurehead of blood and thunder melodrama into a genuinely tragic human being.

Moving pictures have carried melodrama to absurd but extremely exciting lengths. The early moving pictures used crude melodrama where lovely ladies were rescued weekly from harassing perils and harrowing exploits. Later, with *The Birth of a Nation*, *Hearts of the World*, and *Orphans of the Storm*, the melodrama of the screen acquired certain beauty, humor, and truth. Still more recently both stage and screen have given travesties of highly colored melodrama in such plays as *The Bad Man*, *Merton of the Movies* and *The Tavern* and in such pictures as *The Fighting American*. These parodies show amusingly the obvious qualities of melodrama. When, in our reading, we find walls which slide without visible human agency; sweet young girls who are grasped in "the fell clutch of circumstance"; deep-eyed, heavy-moustached villains who wreck on-rushing subway trains to the accompaniment of Satanic laughter; handsome young men in fur coats who, with the agility of mountain goats, leap across floating ice and rescue damsels from seething torrents; infantry, cavalry, aëroplanes, and motor corps travelling rapidly, bearing aloft the stars and stripes, all to save a woman's honor or spare her feelings; we may be sure that we are in the land of melodrama and not of life.

A *chronicle play* deals directly with historical episodes and characters. Its leading figures go through scenes much like those of their real life. Such a play, however, often has a subplot dealing with imaginary characters, thereby adding dramatic interest to the historical narrative. Shakespeare wrote many chronicle plays. His *Henry IV, Part I* and *Part II, Henry V*, and *Richard II* are the best of these. Conspicuous examples of the modern revival of interest in the chronicle play are John Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln* and *Oliver Cromwell*, Louis Parker's *Disraeli*, and Sacha Guitry's *Pasteur*.

The chronicle play

There are several other kinds of drama, some of which are seldom written or acted to-day. In the Middle Ages there were developed the *morality play*, the *miracle* play, and the *mystery play*. In a morality play the characters represent abstract qualities such as Youth, Greed, Virtue, Wealth, Beauty. *Everyman* is one of the best examples of this kind of play.

The morality play

The miracle play, strictly speaking, deals with miraculous events in the life of some saint. Maurice Maeterlinck's *Sister Beatrice* is a modern example of this form of drama. The medieval mystery play portrays biblical scenes and characters.

The miracle play

The mystery play

The *masque* is a dramatic composition with a slight plot. It contains much singing and dancing. Effective costuming is important in the masque which, however, was a much more sedate and dignified a performance than the modern musical comedy. Milton's *Comus*, is probably the best masque extant. Masques were usually acted on certain special occasions and were often serious in tone.

The masque

The name *closet drama* is given to plays meant rather to be read than to be acted. Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and Byron's *Manfred* are closet drama; so, too, are Browning's *Pippa Passes* and *In a Balcony*.

Closet drama

A *fantastic comedy* is a play, sometimes comic in spirit, in which the author gives rein to his fancy, allowing things to happen without regard to reality. Sir James Barrie has become famous for his ability to create plays of this sort. His *The Legend of Leonora, A Kiss for Cinderella, Dear Brutus,* and *Mary Rose* are notable examples of fantastic comedy. Such plays, without being bound to reality, convey subtle human truths. Barrie's *Dear Brutus,* Pinero's *The Enchanted Cottage,* Mackaye's *The Scarecrow,* Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird,* Molnar's *Liliom,* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are all excellent examples of the fantastic comedy.

Fantastic comedy

A *problem play* is written primarily to set forth some problem of human relationships, usually as they are affected by laws and customs. Contemporary drama is full of such plays. They are usually serious and absorbing. If, however, they depend for their interest wholly on the problem presented, they lose their value when that particular problem ceases to exist. Many problem plays which were considered significant when they appeared a few years ago are no longer either read or acted, because the problem is no longer a vital one. It often happens, too, that the attention of the author is distracted by the problem from his plot and his characters. Thus in Galsworthy's *Strife* the problem of capital and labor overshadows the development of characters and plot. Good examples of the problem play are Galsworthy's *The Silver Box,* dealing with social injustice, Ibsen's *A Doll's House,* dealing with marriage, Björnson's *Beyond Human Power,* dealing with faith healing, Ervine's *Mixed Marriage,* dealing with religious struggles in Ireland, and Zangwill's *The Melting Pot,* dealing with the fusion of races in America.

The problem play

A form of drama which has been popular during the past

two decades and which has been highly developed is the one-act play. At the time of the appearance of Maeterlinck's *L'Intruse* (The Intruder) in 1890, the one-act play was still an experimental form of dramatic composition. To-day there are in the literature of almost every European language one-act plays which are little short of masterpieces. Merely to name the dramatists who have used this form successfully—Barrie, Pinero, Shaw, Galsworthy, Maeterlinck, Hauptmann, Tchekov, Synge, Lord Dunsany, Yeats, Lady Gregory—is to list the leading playwrights of contemporary literature. Books on one-act plays, collections by individual authors, and anthologies have sprung up in abundance; amateur and professional companies have used all the resources of modern dramatic art on their production.

The One-Act play

The one-act play bears almost the same relation to the full length play as the short story does to the novel.[1] It is governed by many of the same laws of structure as longer plays, but it is necessarily rigorously condensed. It must accomplish a maximum of dramatic effect with a minimum of dramatic means. Like the short story, it must deal with one dominant theme and, usually, with one dominant character. It need not necessarily take the characters at a crisis, but it must take them at a significant episode in their lives, an episode that is worthy of dramatic development. Like the short story, too, the one-act play must strive to produce a single effect; it cannot go from comedy to tragedy so readily as a full length play. It must, also, like the short story, get under way immediately, develop its complications rapidly, and end emphatically. Its methods of characterization need not differ from those in the longer play, but they must be used with concentration, economy, swiftness, and direct-

[1] See Clayton Hamilton's *Studies in Stagecraft* and Helen Louise Cohen's *One Act Plays by Modern Authors*.

ness. The emphasis must everywhere be sure and unmistakable. The general tone of the one-act play is, however, exceedingly varied. It may be tragedy or romance, poetic fancy or brutal realism, light comedy or boisterous farce.

Miscellaneous classifications

There are other classifications of the drama: sentimental comedy, romantic drama, rural comedy, and psychological drama; but they are not sufficiently important to demand special study.

Plot Construction

A plot implies a struggle

A plot necessarily implies a struggle of some kind between two forces. In every play the leading characters are struggling for or against something. The struggle may be an external one—for the possession of certain papers, for the love of the heroine, for position in society—or it may be an inward one against some overpowering emotion, temptation, or habit—ambition, jealousy, inaction, pride. The struggle may even be against the forces of nature, cold, or heat, or mountains, or sea. In the best plays, however, the struggle is both inward and outward. Portia fights for Antonio's liberty, but she also fights for mercy, which is an inward, or moral, struggle. Hamlet struggles against his incapacity for action; Brutus against corruption and selfishness in politics; Viola against the love that "like a worm i' the bud feeds on her damask cheek"; Benedick and Beatrice against false pride. In all these cases there is something more than a mere chase for some concrete object; there is a struggle of hearts and wills that gives strength and truth to the character drawing of the play. First of all, therefore, we ask about the plot of any play, "Is the struggle an inward or an outward one? If it is inward, how is it outwardly shown to us?"

Certain technical terms are used in the discussion of

plot construction. The leading figure in the struggle, the character who receives most of the dramatist's attention and who rouses the sympathy of the audience, is called the *protagonist.* In *Julius Cæsar* Brutus is the protagonist; in *The Merchant of Venice,* Portia; in *As You Like It,* Rosalind; in *Hamlet,* Hamlet himself. In some plays, such as Hauptmann's *The Weavers,* a whole social group may be the protagonists. The character who represents the force opposing the protagonist is called the *antagonist.* Thus Antony, Octavius, and Cæsar are the antagonists of Brutus in *Julius Cæsar;* Shylock is the antagonist of Portia in *The Merchant of Venice.* The hatred of the Capulets and the Montagues, represented by the two families themselves and their followers, is the opposing force in *Romeo and Juliet.* The king and queen are the antagonists of Hamlet. Macduff is the principal antagonist in *Macbeth.* Some plays have little struggle, or plot, and hence have no strong antagonistic force. *As You Like It* is such a play.

Protagonist

Antagonist

The point at which the action begins is called the *inciting force.* This does not usually come at the rising of the curtain. Some explanation of the situation and characters is required first. This explanation is called the *preliminary exposition.* In *The Merchant of Venice* the plot does not begin until Bassanio and Antonio negotiate with Shylock for a loan, but the preceding scenes of preliminary exposition familiarize us with these two and their friends and with Portia and Nerissa. In *Hamlet* the plot does not begin until Hamlet first meets the ghost of his father. In *Julius Cæsar* there is a good deal of noise and pageantry before Cassius first sows his evil seed in the heart of Brutus.

How a plot is built up

The inciting force and preliminary exposition

The turning point of the struggle, the point where fortune

turns definitely for or against the hero is called the *climax*.

Climax

The climax does not often occur at the end of the play, however. In a Shakespearean play it usually comes somewhere in the third act, about two-thirds of the way through the drama. In *The Merchant of Venice*, for instance, Shylock really began to lose his case the moment that Bassanio chose the right casket, thereby enlisting Portia's aid for Antonio. This is not the highest point of interest in the play—the trial scene is that—but it is the technical turning point.

The climax, or turning point, of *Macbeth* comes when Fleance escapes, for then we know that Macbeth is doomed to failure, that he has murdered Duncan to make the seed of Banquo kings. In *Julius Cæsar* the climax and the highest point of interest coincide in Antony's funeral oration. In *Twelfth Night* the climax occurs when Antonio upbraids Viola, thinking her Sebastian; from then on we know that it is only a question of time before Sebastian and Viola meet and everything is straightened out.

Examples of climax

The final outcome of the struggle is called the *dénouement* or the *catastrophe*. The word catastrophe does not in this sense necessarily mean an unhappy ending, but simply the end of the struggle. The dénouement or catastrophe is easily found in any play. In *As You Like It* it is the final scene in the forest where the marriages occur and the Duke's kingdom is restored to him. In *Twelfth Night* it is the scene in Olivia's house where the mistaken identities and disguises are explained and everyone, except Malvolio, is made happy. In *The Merchant of Venice* it is the scene in the garden at Belmont where the mystery of the rings and the identity of the young lawyer are cleared up. In *Hamlet* it is the final scene where the king, the queen, Hamlet, and Laertes die.

Dénouement

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Living Room in Shakespeare's House, Stratford-on-Avon

A Scene from "Prunella"
As produced by Winthrop Ames in New York in 1913.
(From a model in the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum
of Columbia University)

Courtesy of Famous Players-Lasky Corp.

In the Palace of Versailles
Every day the moving picture is approaching nearer
the standards of real art.
(From the film version of *Monsieur Beaucaire*)

That part of the play between the inciting force and the climax is called the *rising action;* that from the climax to the dénouement the *falling action.* A diagram of the construction of a simple play with no subplot to complicate matters might resemble this:

The rising action and the falling action

Diagram of the plot construction of a typical Shakespearean play

A to *B* represents the preliminary exposition; *B* the inciting force; *B* to *C* the rising action; *C* the climax; *C* to *D* the falling action; *D* the dénouement. Plays vary, of course, in structure. Some have much preliminary exposition, some none at all. Some end at the climax; some after a short rising action and a climax have an *anti-climax.* Some have several climaxes. Some interweave several stories, plots and subplots, each with its inciting force, its climax, and its dénouement. The diagram above disregards subplots, giving merely the main structure of a play.

The beginning of a play is even more important than the beginning of a novel. With only about two hours at his disposal, the dramatist has not a moment to lose. He must at the outset explain the existing situation with whatever antecedent action is necessary to our understanding of the plot, introduce his characters, get his story under way, and arrest the immediate attention of the audience. In times gone by, a dramatist could drag into his play subordinate characters, the servants or guests of the family, who would discuss the principal

The beginning of a play

characters and explain the situation to the audience. Modern audiences consider such scenes clumsy and devoid of interest even in such a play as Clyde Fitch's *Beau Brummell*. The modern tendency in drama is to reduce the number of characters. Nevertheless, however few or many characters there are, they cannot usually be introduced at once without confusing the audience. As soon as possible after the rising of the curtain, the audience must know who the person speaking is and what his relationship is to other people in the play. Partly for this necessity of introducing and orienting his characters, a dramatist often delays the entrance of the leading character until the audience is somewhat familiar with him through the talk of others.

The dramatist must, however, make his dialogue natural; the audience should not feel that the characters are mouthpieces for the broadcasting of information. Nowadays the audience gains a certain amount of information from the printed program. In Shakespeare's day there were no programs, so that much information had to be given in the opening scenes which, in consequence, were often stilted. In *Romeo and Juliet* Shakespeare brings in a chorus to explain the situation in which "A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life." In *As You Like It* he makes Orlando, for the benefit of the audience, explain at length to Adam, who obviously was familiar with the situation, his unfortunate position in his brother's house. The whole story is repeated at the entrance of Oliver; shortly afterwards Oliver confides his hatred of Orlando to Charles; and upon the departure of Charles he goes over the whole subject again in soliloquy. Even the untutored people in the pit must by this time have got the matter straight. The situation of Rosalind and Celia at the court is explained in almost as wooden a fashion, although Rosalind manages to give spontaneity to almost all the scenes in which she appears.

Most of Shakespeare's plays are more successful in their opening scenes. *Julius Cæsar* begins with a scene of bustling horseplay and confusion and pageantry, all dear to Elizabethan audiences, which at the same time makes clear without delay time, place, and principal characters. Notice how our attention is first directed to the common people, who are to have a decisive influence on the play, then to Cæsar and Antony, and finally to Brutus and Cassius. The proud, sad isolation of Brutus is skilfully suggested at the moment of his first appearance.

Hamlet has a masterly opening scene with the bitter cold night, the shivering sentries ready to start at the slightest sound, the dark shadow of the castle, and the sense of impending, supernatural disaster. The first scene of *Macbeth* if well acted, holds the imagination of the audience spellbound and at the same time strikes the keynote of the play. *Othello* opens on a dark night in a deserted street with two men plotting in the shadows, thus giving at once an atmosphere of treachery. *Romeo and Juliet* opens with the sudden violence of a street brawl between the Capulets and the Montagues—a significant suggestion of a drama of quick passions.

The Plot Complication

As the struggle of a play progresses, new elements which complicate matters are usually brought forward. For instance, a play may open with two young men in love with the same girl. Just that situation alone will not make a play. Something has to happen to set the plot in motion. Perhaps the girl expresses a preference for one of the men. The reactions of the rejected suitor thereupon create a new situation. Perhaps he seeks to revenge himself upon his rival. Perhaps he chooses the course of self-sacrifice and then discovers that the other man is unworthy. In any case what

he does leads to something further. In any play something happens to develop plot-action. This process of developing action from the opening situation is the *plot complication.*

To judge a play critically one must consider the complicating elements. In *The Merchant of Venice* the opening situation is complicated by Antonio's inability to furnish Bassanio with money and his consequent application to Shylock. The "merry bond" upon which Shylock insists is a further complication. Another complication follows in the elopement of Jessica with one of Antonio's friends which goads Shylock to a passion for revenge. This is followed by the loss of Antonio's ships, the choice of the right casket by Bassanio, the confession of Portia, Portia's sudden resolution to go to Venice, the trial and subsequent ruin of Shylock. But these are not all the elements introduced into the play. To create suspense and to let the audience know the right casket in advance of Bassanio's choosing, Shakespeare brings in the two princes who try their fate. To create humor and additional sentimental interest, he develops a love affair between Gratiano and Nerissa. And finally to eke out his play, after Antonio is saved, he puts in the episode of the rings. Thus we have a fairly complicated story involving many characters and much dramatic suspense, in which many complicating elements are woven together to make one definite, harmonious plot. In criticising a play, we should ask ourselves whether the complicating elements are few or many; and if many, whether they are knitted firmly together to make a consistent whole.

The complicating elements

In *The Merchant of Venice*, we feel that the complications are somewhat artificial, invented for the plot-construction rather than resulting from the development of the characters. The story came first, and the characters were made to fit it. This method is artificial but not difficult. It was

Difficulty of fitting characters to a ready-made plot

Shakespeare's way, for he almost never invented his own stories; he borrowed them from various sources. However, he created such lifelike characters that we forget the artificialities of the plot. In *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the complicating elements are all artificial; chance plays too conspicuous a part in them. These plays are nevertheless great because they contain great poetry and great characterization. In *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, however, the story seems to stalk out of the men's characters. Hamlet makes his own tragedy, and so does Macbeth. We must ask ourselves, then, "Are the complicating elements of the play natural outgrowths of human relationships or are they artificial, made in advance without regard to the characters? Is the story human or is it machine made? Do things happen because people are what they are or just because the dramatist wanted to complicate the plot?"

Natural and artificial complications

We may also question the originality of the complicating elements. We must not, however, demand that a story be wholly original. The basic situations out of which a story can be made are not very numerous. The story of Cinderella, for instance, is perennially popular. Hundreds of playwrights have taken the situation of the despised Cinderella who finally attains success and, by a little revision of its details, made it sound new. It is perfectly proper that they should, for the Cinderella story has in it elements which are sure to make a universal appeal. But the outlines of the original story with the wicked stepmother and sisters, the fairy coach, and the glass slipper cannot be used over and over again. These complicating elements must be revised and changed so that the old situation will seem fresh,—a new treatment of the ancient theme. For such a treat-

Originality of the complicating element

ment of this very story read Barrie's *A Kiss for Cinderella*. Barrie's *Quality Street* and *What Every Woman Knows* have in them more than one strand of the original Cinderella thread, but they are original plays for all that, because they are fresh in treatment. Stories of mistaken identity, of false accusation, of self-sacrifice, of wandering spirits regenerated by some ennobling influence,—all these old themes can be told with originality in the handling of their complicating elements. It is staleness and flatness of treatment to which we rightly object in judging a play, not familiarity of theme.

Originality means freshness of treatment, not newness of theme

Perhaps some of the complicating elements form a little story in themselves. *The Merchant of Venice*, for instance, contains several stories: the story of the bond, the story of the caskets, the story of Lorenzo and Jessica, the story of the rings. These are all so skillfully interwoven, however, that we cannot think of one without the others. For this reason *The Merchant of Venice* is a striking example of the perfect fusion of different plot elements. We have a right to ask of any play, "Does it tell more than one story? If so, are these stories satisfactorily combined so that they are interdependent?" We shall not find Shakespeare always so successful as he was in *The Merchant of Venice*. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the stories of Theseus and Hippolyta, of Oberon and Titania, of the lovers in the forest, and of the countrymen and their play are not closely connected. We drop one to read about the other and we do not always feel that they are essential each to the other. The subplots of *The Tempest* are not perfectly woven into the main plot. Even in *Twelfth Night*, the subplot of Malvolio and his yellow stockings has little to do with the main plot of Orsino, Sebastian, Viola, and Olivia. In a play like *Julius Cæsar* in which the complicating elements

Subplots

are comparatively few and simple, the difficulties of plot construction are correspondingly small.

In judging a play, then, we should ask ourselves what the complicating elements of the plot are, whether they are few or many, whether they are artificial or natural, whether they are new or old in treatment, and whether or not they are firmly knit together. **Summary**

Once the preliminary exposition is disposed of, the rising action of a play should lead by rapid degrees of increasing interest to the climax. The rising action of a play is usually the easiest to write since, as new complicating elements are introduced, the interest naturally increases until the turning point of the struggle. The rising action is usually filled with points of interest or *minor crises*, where the suspense is increased because of a new complicating element or a new turn in the struggle. These dramatic moments increase in importance and frequency till the play leads inevitably to a final turning point, the *climax*. In a modern play the most important of these minor crises usually come at the end of each act so that the curtain goes down on a dramatic scene, the climax coming at the end of the next to the last act. In a Shakespearean play such a structure was not practicable because of Elizabethan stage conditions, but the minor crises and the climax are there just the same. **The rising action** **Minor crises**

In *Julius Cæsar* minor moments of dramatic suspense are provided in increasing number up to the assassination of Cæsar. The scene between Cæsar and Calpurnia makes us feel that he may not go to the Capitol after all; the short scene between Portia and the soothsayer suggests that the conspiracy may have been discovered; the incident of Artemidorus increases this suspense which is made more intense by the curious behavior of Popilius Lena. All these lead **Development of the rising action of *Julius Cæsar***

up in a steady crescendo to the tremendous crisis of the murder itself, and then the suspense of the play advances by leaps and bounds to the scene of the funeral oration, the real climax. And even in this funeral scene the final result of the speech is not certain until the very end, when Antony reads Cæsar's will. This climax has all the qualities which a climax should have: it comes at the end of a steady series of minor crises, it is inevitable, it has a strong emotional appeal, and it is decisive.

Qualities of a good climax

In judging the rising action of any play we should ask these questions: Does the interest rise with the rising action to the climax of the play? Does the author introduce minor crises, moments of dramatic tension, of increasing intensity, as the play progresses? Is the final climax the natural outgrowth of all that has gone before it? Is the climax a decisive turn in the struggle? Has it a strong emotional appeal?

So far as suspense is concerned the falling action is the hardest part of the play to write. Once the turning point has been reached, it is difficult to avoid an emotional relaxation that may lead to loss of interest. It is noticeable that the interest in a good many of Shakespeare's plays lags during the fourth act, the one which usually follows the climax. In *Macbeth* the height of the interest is reached at the banquet scene; when Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo and learns that Banquo's son has escaped, his nerves give way and he betrays himself.

Development of the falling action

After this we feel sure of the end. Consequently the fourth act drags a little. The scene in the witches' cave and the murder of Lady Macduff and her child are fairly successful attempts to keep up the interest, but nothing can make the long scene between Malcolm, Ross, and Macduff in England

The falling action of *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*

anything but dull so far as the main interest in the play goes. The fourth act of *Hamlet* is even more halting. After the play and the closet scene, the interest lags undeniably till the fifth act.

On the other hand, in some plays Shakespeare is most successful. The fourth act of *The Merchant of Venice*, for example, is the most interesting act in the play, because of the emotional tension of the court scene. The quarrel of Brutus and Cassius saves the fourth act of *Julius Cæsar*, even though we feel sure of the outcome of the play after Antony's speech. In *As You Like It* no climax is reached until the fourth act when the appearance of Oliver in the forest and the swooning of Rosalind at the news of Orlando's heroism make us feel that the dénouement of the comedy is near. After this, the unraveling of the plot is rapid. *Othello* has no well-defined climax; the fourth act contains moments of as great tension as any in the play. In all these plays the falling action is so well handled that there is no break in the suspense till the end of the play. In judging any play, we should, therefore, note especially how the falling action is managed. Does the action drag after the climax, to pick up again towards the end of the play, or does the author succeed in making the falling action as interesting as all that has gone before it? If he is thus successful, by what means does he attain his success? Is it by delaying the climax till almost the end of the play, thereby making the falling action short and fast? Is it by the introduction into the falling action of scenes dramatically interesting in themselves? Is the interest in the reactions of the characters to the climax sufficient to carry along the falling action? Or are the after effects of the climax uncertain enough to create suspense till the end of the play?

Successful development of falling action in Shakespeare

What to notice about the falling action

The same artistic principles that govern the ending of any story apply to the drama as well. The ending should be logical and hence satisfactory, but not necessarily happy. A happy ending to *Hamlet* or *King Lear* or *Macbeth* would be irrelevant. But to have ended *As You Like It* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream* unhappily would have been downright treachery to the audience. The nature of the story, that is, the whole trend of its plot and characters, and the purpose of the author in telling the story should be considered. If *Romeo and Juliet* is to be the short and blissful tragedy of young love, there would certainly be nothing gained by letting the young lovers go on to an unromantic old age. If Lear and Cordelia have lived and suffered through five harrowing acts, no one in the audience should begrudge them the peace of death. Kent says truly to the grieving Edgar:

The principles governing a satisfactory dénouement

Some logical endings

> "Vex not his ghost; O, let him pass! he hates him much
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer."

If John Galsworthy's *The Silver Box* is to teach the bitter lesson of social and economic injustice that it sets out to teach, it cannot give in to the public's weakness for a happy ending; Mrs. Jones must suffer unjustly or the lesson of the play will be lost on the audience. The inevitable ending to Tchekov's *The Cherry Orchard* is the destruction of the orchard. Ibsen's *A Doll's House* would lose its whole point if Nora remained with her husband. The idea behind Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* would have been inexcusably falsified if Crichton had married Lady Mary. Whether or not we like the ending of a play, we must be clearsighted enough to see whither the plot has been tending, what the characters are making of their

lives, what the purpose of the author is, and then we must accept the inevitable ending whatever it be.

In a play, everything has to be concretely shown to the audience. The author cannot insert his own comment and explanation as he can in a novel. His play must stand or fall by what is said and done on the stage. Accordingly, if he wishes to produce a certain effect, he has to use a scene or a character for that purpose. This necessity is *the principle of dramatic emphasis*. For instance, nothing is more dramatically effective than a sharp contrast. Most intensely dramatic plays are full of antithesis. Strikingly different characters are placed side by side. A scene of strong emotional tension is relieved by a humorous remark or a humorous episode. A period of calm is followed by one of storm and stress, or vice versa. No dramatist was ever more fond of this device of contrast than Shakespeare. *Macbeth* is filled with startling antithesis. Almost the first words of the play are contradictory:

Scenes used for special purposes

The use of dramatic contrast

How contrast is used in *Macbeth*

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair."

Macbeth has "reaped golden opinions of all sorts of people" when the play opens, but at the end his name has become anathema. "A little water clears us of this deed!" exclaims Lady Macbeth after the murder of Duncan, but later she moans in her sleep, "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." The gentle, trusting Duncan is contrasted with his black and treacherous host. The hours of Macbeth's triumphs are transformed into the hours of his greatest agony. The scene where Macbeth, emerging from the chamber of Duncan with Duncan's blood upon his hands, stands with his wife shivering and whispering, is followed by the coarse comedy of the drunken porter.

All Shakespeare's plays use contrast in this same way.

Contrast in Shakespearian drama

In *Julius Cæsar* there is a telling contrast between the fierce bitterness, jealousy, hurt pride, and hot anger of the quarrel scene and the quiet, peaceful tenderness of the following scene between Brutus and his little page. In *A Winter's Tale* passages of almost revolting ugliness and violence are followed by poetry of the most delicate beauty, such as Perdita's:

> "Daffodils
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,
> But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
> Or Cytherea's breath."

The imagery shifts from the violence of Paulina's:

> "What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?
> What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling
> In lead or oils?"

to the boyish enthusiasm of Florizel's:

> "What you do
> Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,
> I'd have you do it ever; when you sing,
> I'd have you buy and sell so, so give alms,
> Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,
> To sing them too; when you dance, I wish you
> A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
> Nothing but that."

In *The Merchant of Venice* the broken despairing bitterness of Shylock's final humiliation is followed by careless banter about rings and the romantic glamor of Lorenzo's and Jessica's "lyrical boy-and-girl love" in the garden where "the sweet wind doth gently kiss the trees" and "the moonlight sleeps sweet upon this bank." Contrast is a telling dramatic device.

There are, of course, other dramatic devices. Some

scenes serve almost wholly to create suspense by foreshadowing. Such are the scenes in *Julius Cæsar* between Portia and the soothsayer, the scene of the storm, and the scene in which Artemidorus appears. Some scenes merely convey information about the plot or the characters or the general situation of the play. The opening scene of *Julius Cæsar* does this; in fact, this is the purpose of the opening scene of most plays. Other scenes serve to establish character. Thus the scene between Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus in *Julius Cæsar* shows the character of the triumvirate; the scenes between Brutus and Portia, between Brutus and Lucius, reveal the tender, domestic side of Brutus; the scene between Brutus and Ligarius shows the influence of Brutus over the truly patriotic men of Rome. Other scenes suggest a lapse of time. Thus in *Julius Cæsar* the scene at the camp near Sardis immediately preceding the tent scene suggests the lapse of time as well as gives information; so, too, does the scene between Malcolm, Macduff, and Ross, in the fourth act of *Macbeth*.

Scenes used for foreshadowing

Scenes used to convey information

Scenes used to establish character

Occasionally in Elizabethan drama, scenes were inserted because stage conditions made them necessary. Scenes requiring many properties were set up on the rear of the stage which could be curtained off from that part of the stage which projected into the pit. When two scenes requiring different scenery followed each other it was necessary to insert between them a short scene requiring no setting. This short scene was acted on the front of the stage while the setting was arranged on the back behind the curtain. Elizabethan audiences tolerated no intervals between scenes. After the trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, therefore, we have a short scene in the street while the next scene in Portia's garden is being ar-

Scenes made necessary by stage conditions

ranged behind the curtains. Such instances are common in Shakespearean drama.

The obligatory scene

The obligatory scene occurs in drama as well as in fiction. This is the scene which the author is under obligations to show us because he has prepared us for it in advance. In *The Merchant of Venice* the court scene is obligatory; we expect it and we should not be satisfied merely to be told about it afterwards. In *Julius Cæsar* there have been enough differences of opinion between Brutus and Cassius to make the quarrel scene obligatory. In *Twelfth Night*, once Viola has encountered Antonio, we expect her to find her lost brother; and when we hear the plot against Malvolio we expect a scene in which it works out. Obligatory scenes exist in every drama.

Summary of plot construction

The important things, then, in plot construction are the nature of the plot, the beginning of the play, the technique of the rising action, the climax, the falling action, and the dénouement. Important, too, are the special dramatic scenes and characters.

Characters

Shakespeare, as we have seen, usually took an old story or an old play and rewrote it. Often he built up his plots from several stories which he combined. At first he was not wholly successful in making characters do naturally the things arbitrarily demanded of them by the plot. The characters in his early plays are not always well-rounded, living people. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Hermia and Helena are scarcely individualized at all; Oberon and Titania are as unreal as fairies may well be; but Puck and Bottom are strongly individualized. In the later comedies there is a distinct advance in character drawing. Shylock is such a human creation that he nearly distracts our interest from

the plot; to many people *The Merchant of Venice* is the tragedy of Shylock rather than the romance of Portia. The character of Viola gives a fragrant charm to *Twelfth Night;* and Sir Andrew, Sir Toby, Maria, and Malvolio are distinct characters who might exist independent of the main action of the story. *As You Like It* is filled with charming people who make us forget the absurdity of the story. *Much Ado about Nothing* contains Benedick and Beatrice and Dogberry, and for them we tolerate the rather unsatisfactory love story of Hero and Claudio. These plays show the ability to create real people; the characters make the play in spite of the plot.

Some characters sacrificed to the needs of the plot

But notice the improbabilities in character drawing that result from the artificial stories into which Shakespeare has thrust some of his people. No one can condone the conduct of Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice;* yet no one can blame her, for she is a creature of the plot. To account for Shylock's hatred Shakespeare could not but be inconsistent here. In *Twelfth Night* the obliging cheerfulness with which Orsino transfers his affections from Olivia to Viola and the equally astounding match between Olivia and Sebastian are inconceivable; yet if these things did not happen, there would be no story. In *As You Like It,* the sudden conversion of Duke Frederick, the remarkable reform of Oliver, and the rapid attachment of Oliver and Celia who "no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed, no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason, no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy," are occurrences certainly not consistent with human nature outside the forest of Arden. Outside the forest of Arden, we fear that Orlando would have seen through Rosalind's disguise at once. But if the characters had acted consistently, what

would have become of the story? In all these plays, Shakespeare has borrowed stories with ready-made plots weaving them into plays; but he has created such real people for them that we feel surprised and hurt when they cease momentarily to be real in order to go through with the plot. We expect them to take the plot into their own hands.

Examples of masterly adaptation of character to story

In his greatest plays, however, Shakespeare has so wonderfully adapted character to plot that the whole story seems to proceed from the inner lives of the characters. All the sources of the main plot of *Hamlet* are not known, though the story was certainly not original with Shakespeare; but when we read or see the play we are interested only in the problem that the *character* Hamlet presents; everything that happens seems to proceed from that unfathomable spirit. In *Macbeth* the tragedy emerges inevitably from the dark mists of Macbeth's guilty thoughts. The plot of *Othello* proceeds directly from the principal characters involved. Every character in *Julius Cæsar* shapes the course of his own life. Our first interest in the characters of play, then, should be in relation to the plot. Do they make the plot or does the plot make them?

Plays revolving about one dominant character

Frequently the whole action of a play revolves about one central figure. In comparison with this central figure, the other characters are mere figureheads in the plot; they may be slightly individualized, but they are interesting mainly in their relationship to the overshadowing figure of the play. *Hamlet* is such a play. The Queen, Ophelia, and Horatio come in for a share of our attention, but without the fascinating central figure there could be no serious interest in the play. *Macbeth*, too, exists for the sake of its two protagonists; the others, Macduff, Ross, Lenox, Duncan, Malcolm, are but faintly outlined figures, emphasized chiefly as they throw

light on that guilty pair. Many modern plays revolve thus about one dominant character, for instance, *Beau Brummel*, *Dulcy*, *Enter Madame*, *Peter Pan*, *The Emperor Jones*. *Julius Cæsar*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, *As You Like It*, on the other hand, have a variety of interesting characters. It is hard to say whether Brutus or Cassius or Antony in *Julius Cæsar* offers the actor most opportunities.

In reading a play, always keep in mind the actor's point of view. What part or parts should you prefer to play? What "stage business" should you insert at such and such a point? Does this line call for a gesture and that for a certain facial expression? What tone of voice should be used here? A play is written to be acted; the reader who does not as he reads make himself a potential actor misses the pleasure of reading drama. Who could read the long scene between Brutus and Cassius in *Julius Cæsar* ignoring the tone of Cassius's voice, the malignant glint in his eyes, or that sarcastic smile of his

Opportunities for the actor

> "As if he mock'd himself and scorn'd his spirit
> That could be mov'd to smile at anything"?

What reader can afford to pass over the glorious opportunities for the actor in Antony's funeral oration? Does not the quarrel between Brutus and Cassius lose half its humanity if one cannot read it with appropriate tone and gesture? In *Macbeth* what should you have Macbeth and his wife do after the banquet is over and the guests have gone? How should you indicate the weariness, the pathetic tenderness, the bleak despair of Lady Macbeth's brief sentences now that the crisis is past and she has failed? Who but a potential actress can get the real pathos out of the sleep-walking scene? In *As You Like It*, Rosalind must have animation, changing expression, boyish grace, spontaneity of voice and gesture if she is to be a real person. "O coz,

coz, coz, my pretty little coz," she cries between smiles and tears to the understanding Celia, "that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love!" But if we follow her through the play with the imagination of an actress, we *shall* know. Every tone, every fleeting expression, every careless gesture will cry out for us that "young Orlando hath tripped up the wrestler's heels and her heart both in an instant." To portray the character of Hamlet is many an actor's highest ambition. There is hardly a line in all that long part which is not known to players and audience before the performance begins; yet each actor hopes to give a fresh interpretation, to pluck out anew the heart of Hamlet's mystery. And every reader should seek this, too, for the true reader of plays is at heart an actor; and the actor, as well as the author, is a creator of the part.

Managing entrances and exits

A practical difficulty in managing the characters in a play lies in the way they are brought on and off the stage, into the play and out of it. Exits and entrances must occur as naturally as possible, and frequently they must be dramatically effective. A character cannot merely come in when he is needed and go out as soon as the author is through with him, and yet he must come and go at the right times. To manage this is no insuperable difficulty, but carelessness on the part of the dramatist sometimes makes exits and entrances obviously mechanical. *Julius Cæsar*, an admirably constructed play, contains excellent examples of natural yet dramatically effective management. The second scene of Act I, for instance, serves skillfully to introduce the characters so that the audience will know each one; to characterize by a few deft touches the leading speakers: Antony, Brutus, Cassius, and Cæsar; and to set the plot in motion. Yet all these people are brought forward and dismissed so naturally that the technical skill with which it is all done passes almost

unnoticed. The scene in the garden of Brutus, the assassination scene, the funeral scene, and the quarrel scene are all managed with the same skill. In *As You Like It*, however, the workmanship is less careful. At the beginning of the play people come in and perform their business rather mechanically, and the action is decidedly spasmodic, as if the dramatist were himself anxious to escape to the Forest of Arden. LeBeau and Charles the wrestler are at times little more than very obvious means of conveying information and getting the plot started. To drag in a character arbitrarily and then to dismiss him as arbitrarily is not careful technique. And to call two characters, one of whom is not really essential, by the same name as is done in *As You Like It* is mere indifference. In *Julius Cæsar*, however, all the characters, except possibly the poet, are an integral part of the action; even Ligarius serves a necessary purpose and is not forgotten after the purpose has been accomplished. Notice, then, the way in which characters are brought on to the stage and how naturally they are disposed of when they are no longer needed. Notice, too, the use the author makes of his subordinate characters, whether they are of assistance to the play or introduced as a convenient but not essential means to an end.

Number and range of characters

The number and range of characters in a dramatist's work is also a good indication of the depth of his power and the breadth of his sympathies. Most dramatists work within a comparatively restricted field. As you read more widely in the drama, you will soon be able to identify the typical Ibsen or Pinero heroine to expect the same sort of people and the same sort of talk in all plays by Maeterlinck or by Shaw, to look for the whimsical sentiment that characterizes Barrie. These authors do a certain kind of thing well, but outside of their peculiar sphere they are not usually successful. One cannot

imagine Shaw indulging in the mysticism of *The Blue Bird* and *Pelleas and Mélisande* or Maeterlinck dazzling us with the brilliant perversities of *Man and Superman* and *Pygmalion*. And as for Barrie, you may take him or leave him, but you will not find another like him.

With Shakespeare the case is different. It has been said that we cannot find the man Shakespeare through his style because he has a different style for every character. Cassius says just what we expect Cassius to say from what we know of him; Brutus has a different way of looking at things and a different manner of speech; Octavius is sharply individualized in a few laconic speeches; and Mark Antony is unmistakably Mark Antony. Shakespeare seems to put himself, as if by psychic magic, into the place of each character and to think and feel and speak with him. Notice the differentiation between Macbeth and his wife. See how the hurt pride and passionate but inarticulate tenderness of Cassius's nature are revealed in but a few words. Read the graveyard scene in *Hamlet*. How differently and yet how truly does the dialogue reveal each speaker! In *The Merchant of Venice* we can hear the very tones of Shylock's voice as he speaks; it is no wonder that few actors have failed to make the part interesting. There seems to be no limit to the range of Shakespeare's power to characterize. We have such diverse creations as the bestial Caliban and the innocent Miranda side by side in *The Tempest*. He sees into the souls of Cleopatra, the serpent of old Nile, and Ophelia, the rose of May, with equal intuition. Lady Macbeth and Desdemona, Celia and Audrey, the wolfish Regan and the sparkling Beatrice, all are equally real. He sees clearly the pathos of old age in King Lear:

Depth and range of Shakespeare's insight into character

"*Lear.* Pray do not mock me.
I am a very foolish fond old man,

Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful; for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am.

Lear. Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Doct. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more
Till further settling.

Cor. Will't please your highness walk?

Lear. You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.

He sympathizes, too, with the careless exuberance of youth in Mercutio:

"*Mer.* O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Over men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
Her traces of the smallest spider web,

Her collars of the moonshine's watery beams.
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep
Then dreams he of another benefice.
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two
And sleeps again.

He understands equally well the simple manliness of Horatio, who has been

"As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Have ta'en with equal thanks,"

and the strange combination of sensuality and imagination in Falstaff, who, on being told that he owes God a death on the battlefield of honor, philosophizes:

"'Tis not due yet; I would be loath to pay Him before His day. What need I be so forward with Him that He calls not on me?

Well, 'tis no matter; honor pricks me on. Yea, but how if honor prick me off when I come on? how then? Can honor set to a leg? no; or an arm? no; or take away the grief of a wound? no. Honor hath no skill in surgery, then? no. What is honor? a word. What is that word honor? air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? no. Doth he hear it? no. Is it insensible, then? yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? no. Why? detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it. Honor is a mere scutcheon; and so ends my catechism."

Quite different from this is the Elizabethan enthusiasm shown by Hotspur in the same play:

> "By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,
> To pluck bright honor from the pale fac'd moon,
> Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
> Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
> And pluck up drowned honor by the locks!"

The depth and range of Shakespeare's knowledge of human nature distinguish him from all other dramatists.

In studying the number and range of any dramatist's characters we ask ourselves certain questions. Are the characters few or many? Are they drawn from one class of society or from all classes? Are they individualized or merely typical? Does the author excel in portraying one type or is he master of several? Can you identify him by the sort of people he writes about?

What to consider in studying number and range of characters

You may have noticed that the players in the average stock company are listed according to the type of character which they habitually play. Thus we have a leading man and a leading woman, a pair of "second leads," a "character" man and woman, a "juvenile," an "ingenue." This is really a sad commentary on the characters in a good many plays; they are really nothing but stock figures designed to supply the average company with acting material. These plays have a "comedy part,"

"Stock" characters

a "character part," an inevitable subplot for the juvenile and the ingenue, a "heavy character part" usually for the villain, and the "big scenes" for the leading actors. The characters are moved by easy machine-made motives, and their reactions are conventional means of advancing the plot. It would be discouraging to discover just what percentage of the plays written for amateur and professional performance in this country is thus constructed.

Absurd motives and reactions of motion picture characters

Perhaps the easiest way in which you can observe this sort of mechanical character drawing is to study the motives and reactions of the characters in the average moving picture. The moving pictures are making rapid strides, it is true, but even now far too many of them are stupid ready-made stories about conventional characters concocted to please the most unthinking part of the audience. Notice the absurd, motiveless way in which the heroine of a serial picture thrusts herself into danger just to supply another episode. To what fiendish lengths does the villain of the piece go in order to get what he wants—usually "them papers" in the parlance of the spectators! If the play is a more serious one, notice how mechanically the characters move in order to bring the complications about. Half the difficulties between husbands and wives, parents and children, in the moving pictures could be avoided if either side had a grain of common sense or if the harassed heroine would do what any ordinary person would do—tell the truth. Hundreds of plots hang on this absurd unwillingness of the characters to do the natural thing. If the picture is meant to be sad, the director and the scenario writer combine efforts to force the characters to do what in their opinion will make the public weep, not what normal people would do. Consequently gifted actors and actresses find themselves cruelly foreclosing mortgages on defenceless old people,

Hackneyed situations in moving pictures

driving lovely heroines into the teeth of "such a storm as men remember yet," setting countless lamps in myriads of windows to guide the returning footsteps of wandering sons, placing a single rose on a mother's grave, and shedding glycerine tears nearly the size of eggs for the edification of the audience. Wives seem to be inherently vain, foolish, and extravagant; husbands inevitably stupid, oblivious to all but business. Children seem born to suffer without reason except to reunite incompatible parents. Country girls peep coyly from behind trees, wear their hair in rippling curls, paddle in babbling brooks, whisper to little squirrels, and marry handsome young millionaires in natty riding clothes. Innocent, helpless girls are forced to go through harrowing experiences that would have turned gray the hair of Madame de Farge herself. Manly young heroes are falsely accused on circumstantial evidence and thrillingly rescued by the heroine at the last moment. Of course there is a great deal of actual genius wasted in the acting and directing and photographing of these absurdities. Every day the moving picture is approaching nearer to the standards of real art. Every day the stories and the characters are becoming more human with less "hokum." But nothing can be accomplished unless the audience does its share. Remember, then, that as intelligent citizens you should demand that the characters in the plays you see on the screen and on the stage be human, with natural motives and reactions, and a logical development as the result of the complex influences of the plot.

The public's part

Here, again, we go back to Shakespeare for typical illustrations of what is improbable as well as for what is masterly in characterization. As we have seen, in some of his earlier plays the characters were fitted into an artificial plot. No real man would have married Olivia so abruptly as

Improbabilities in the motives and reactions of some Shakespearean characters

Sebastian does in *Twelfth Night;* the sudden change of heart in Orsino and in Olivia herself is, to put it mildly, surprising. That Oliver's experience under the oak tree in *As You Like It* should have brought about so miraculous a transformation of his character is not convincing; indeed, his original villainy does not seem to have had any natural basis. To tell the truth, the whole plot of *As You Like It* is absurd; so, too, are the plots of *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, The Comedy of Errors, Much Ado About Nothing,* and many another of Shakespeare's plays.

Examples of Shakespearean characters that rise above the plot

But with him there is this difference: once he has accepted the absurd plot, his characters frequently become alive, too real for their surroundings. Sometimes they even interfere with his plot. In *Measure for Measure* it has been pointed out that Barnadine was created to serve the plot by being executed; but he became so real that Shakespeare apparently had not the heart to make way with him. Shakespeare is commonly accused of killing off Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* because he was becoming a dangerous rival to Romeo in the sympathies of the audience. There is little doubt that Shylock was originally intended as a comic figure; but he became so human as his character took shape in Shakespeare's mind that he turned tragic instead, thereby creating for future commentators on *The Merchant of Venice* a perplexing problem. Jaques, who has no business in *As You Like It* anyway, becomes very much alive and walks about holding up the action and commandeering the interest of the audience. The characters concerned with the plot must get along as well as they can while Jaques, well in the center of the stage, delivers his famous speech:

"*Jaques.* All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:

They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms:
Then, the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school: and then, the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow: then, a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth: and then, the justice,
In fair round belly, with good capon lined,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part: the sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side,
His youthful hose well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound: last scene of all,
That ends this strange, eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything."

Characters such as these rise above the plot, but they cannot get out of it.

Examples of masterly character development

There is no trouble with the logical development of the characters in Shakespeare's plays; in his greatest tragedies the reactions of the characters to every turn in the action are always intuitively right and their development as the play proceeds is felt to be inevitable. It is wonderful to contemplate in the few pages of *Macbeth* the complete transformation of a man's soul revealed with stern justice but infinite compassion. The stages of Macbeth's degradation are mercilessly revealed as the play proceeds, and yet the character keeps our sympathies to the

end. But notice how different his reactions are from those of Lady Macbeth. Each develops inevitably according to the forces within; yet each has similar experiences. Study the development of Brutus and Cassius in *Julius Cæsar*. How fatally the obstinate blind idealism of Brutus pursues him through the play; how gradual is his disillusionment; how welcome his final peace. We feel that he could not have done otherwise; he was true to the best light he had. Notice, too, how gradually the character of Cassius is revealed. We meet him envious, bitter, scheming, shrewd, but possessed of a strain of patriotism, an unerring insight into human nature, a sort of subconscious awe of the innate righteousness in Brutus. These characteristics develop as we follow him through success and failure; and we learn, before the play is over, to respect and admire him with all his weaknesses. Never do we feel that he does or says anything untrue to his nature as Shakespeare conceived it.

Brutus and Cassius as studies in motivation

We find this same inevitableness of reaction and development in all of Shakespeare's greatest characters and greatest plays. It is worth your while to see what these people do at each crisis; what flash of insight into their souls is given by each of these significant moments. And when you have finished a play, go back over it watching the course of the character's development; it will seem to you then a well-defined trail leading in an inevitable direction. Such should be the impression of the motives and reactions and consequent development of the characters in any great play. With this in mind, study the next play that you see.

The development of characters should seem inevitable

The dialogue of a play is, of course, the chief means of revealing character as well as of advancing plot. It is, therefore, more important than the dialogue of a work of prose fiction.

The importance of dialogue

In the first place, dialogue must serve to tell the story without noticeable digressions, that is, it ought always to contribute something toward plot, character, or setting. The dialogue of some plays is so fascinating in itself that the author is apt to let his characters talk on and on while the development of story and character is temporarily halted. In Shakespeare's plays, there is often useless conversation which is dispensed with in most modern productions. On the other hand, some of his plays are marvels of condensation. There is scarcely a speech in the whole play of *Julius Cæsar* that does not serve some legitimate purpose.

Dialogue should be relevant

In the second place, the dialogue should be adapted to the character speaking. In *As You Like It* one cannot imagine Audrey, who replies to Touchstone's rhetoric with commendable caution:

Dialogue adapted to individual characters

"I do not know what poetical is. Is it honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing?"

exchanging clever, irresponsible banter with Rosalind and Celia. In *Romeo and Juliet* every word the Nurse utters is distinctly "in character" with the garrulous, vulgar, shallow, but likable old woman she is:

"*Nurse.* I am a-weary, give me leave a while.
Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunce have I had!
Jul. I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news.
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; good, good nurse, speak.
Nurse. Jesu, what haste! Can you not stay a while?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?
Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good, or bad? Answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance.

Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

Nurse. Well, you have made a simple choice;
you know not how to choose a man. Romeo!
no, not he; though his face be better than any
man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a
hand, and a foot, and a body, though they be
not to be talk'd on, yet they are past compare.
He is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll war-
rant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways,
wench; serve God. What, have you din'd at
home?

Jul. No, no! But all this did I know before.
What says he of our marriage? What of that?

Nurse. Lord, how my head aches! What a head have I!
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back o' t'other side,—ah, my back, my back!
Beshrew your heart for sending me about
To catch my death with jauncing up and down!

Jul. I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse. Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
and a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome,
and, I warrant, a virtuous,—Where is your
mother?

Jul. Where is my mother! why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
"Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
'Where is your mother?'"

Nurse. O God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

Jul. Here's such a coil!—Come, what says Romeo?

Nurse. Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

Jul. I have.

Nurse. Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife."

Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* distinguishes himself forever by the shallow vanity and the hopeless stupidity

of his every sentence. Casca's words in *Julius Cæsar* reveal him as superstitious, boorish, and self-important. Only rarely does Shakespeare fail to vary his dialogue to suit the character speaking.

In the third place, the dialogue is almost necessarily heightened for dramatic effect. The dramatist must touch only the high places in conversation; he has not time to set down the thousand irrelevancies and banalities of our everyday speech. It is practically necessary for him to emphasize story and character by making people speak more cleverly, stupidly, eloquently, or pathetically than they would in real life. The stupidity of Dogberry in [1] *Much Ado About Nothing* has to be accentuated. Ophelia has to be made pathetic in a few words; the dramatist cannot stop to record the different ideas and sensations that go through her mind. Consequently he makes her speech much more significant than it would ordinarily be in a brief sentence or two. Indeed, her heart-broken half-murmured responses to Hamlet's brutality in the so-called nunnery scene are among the most intensely touching things in all Shakespeare:

Dialogue usually heightened for dramatic effect

"*Hamlet.* I did love you once.
Ophelia. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.
Hamlet. You should not have believed me. . . . I love you not.
Ophelia. I was the more deceived."

In *As You Like It* the characters never seem at loss for answers; one might think with Jaques that they had all been acquainted with goldsmiths' wives and conn'd them out of rings. The retort courteous, the quip modest, the reproof valiant, all are much in evidence; and every sally of wit or absurdity is given with apparent spontaneity and relish. Surely people in real life would at least occasionally

[1] See Act III, Scene 3.

pause for breath. But in the drama there is no time for the barren stretches of daily talk; the dramatist must choose what is essential and dash on with his play. The principle of dramatic emphasis must be observed.

The dialogue of a play should be felt to proceed from the springs of character, and in this sense should be true to life.

The question of realistic dialogue

But, as we have just seen, it has to be selective. There is no reason why it should not be the language of the imagination of the author instead of the direct speech of everyday people. It is interesting to compare an experiment in realistic dialogue, John Masefield's *Tragedy of Pompey the Great*, with the poetic language of Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*. Certainly the characters in the latter are not less human because they speak in blank verse. In real life no one would be likely to indulge in Hamlet's extended soliloquies; yet if these offenses against reality were removed from the play, how much of its truth would go with them! Since the day of Ibsen, the great Norwegian dramatist, there has been a widespread prejudice against the use of soliloquies and asides, or any obvious departure from the speech of real life in the dialogue of a play. But whether the dramatists who follow the example of Ibsen in this respect have added enough reality to their work to make up for what they have lost in imaginative expression is an open question. At any rate, Shakespeare's plays would be less great without their soliloquies. Dialogue, then, may be true without being realistic.

The influence of Ibsen on dialogue

Finally we may consider the essential value of the dialogue apart from the play itself. It is not necessary that a play contain passages in themselves of permanent intellectual or literary value, but such passages, of course, contribute that much greatness to it. If the dramatist has moments of outstanding eloquence, like Antony's

Special qualities in dialogue

A Scene from a Performance of "Oliver Twist" in the New Amsterdam Theater, New York, 1912
(From a model in the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University)

"Thomas Carlyle," by Whistler

speech in *Julius Cæsar*, of depth of insight like Hamlet's speech "To be or not to be," of tremendous imaginative power like the heath scenes in *King Lear*, of tender poetic beauty like the love scenes in *Romeo and Juliet*, of ironical keenness like the seven ages of man speech in *As You Like It*, or of passionate human protest like Shylock's defence of his race in *The Merchant of Venice*, the play will live. Consequently any special qualities the dialogue of a play may have are worth looking for and remembering.

"Purple patches"

Setting

The setting of a play is not usually emphasized or elaborated so much as the setting of a novel but it is important for at least two reasons. In the first place, it may be directly influential on plot or character, or both. In prose fiction we have seen the interaction of these three elements. In drama this interdependency is not so pronounced, though it is frequently present. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has to take place in a fairy wood; *The Tempest* could not have happened except on Prospero's island. Barrie calls attention to the importance of the setting of his *Quality Street* by naming the play for it. His *The Admirable Crichton*, *Dear Brutus*, and *Mary Rose* are also examples of the influence of setting on plot. Other plays in which setting has an essential part are easy to recall—*The Copperhead*, *The Passion Flower*, *The Rising of the Moon*, *The Great Divide*, *The Scarecrow*, *Anna Christie*, *Merton of the Movies*, and *Outward Bound*.

Influence of setting on plot

In the second place, the setting may be dramatically effective even if it is not essential to the action. There is a good deal in having the action occur at an appropriate place, in using the setting to create an appropriate atmosphere for an event. It is not necessary that Casca and Brutus be won over to the conspiracy on

Setting and atmosphere

the night of a fearful storm, but certainly the terror of the night creates an atmosphere of dramatic suspense which adds tremendously to the play. Macbeth might very well listen to the forces of evil on a bright sunny day, but it is far more effective dramatically to have the play steeped in the atmosphere of night and terror, on the blasted heath, in the rude banquet hall lit by flaring torches, in weird underground caverns, and in the castle halls at midnight where unearthly chills and black shadows and hollow echoes are gathered. The sun appears only once in the whole play and then as if for purposes of contrast. Duncan remarks that the castle has a pleasant seat and that the birds are nesting happily in every available nook and cranny of its sunny walls, but the audience already suspects it to be the breeding place of treachery and murder. The whole play of *As You Like It* is a notable example of the charm that atmosphere can throw over a play through setting alone. There is little to describe the Forest of Arden. People fleet the time there carelessly as they did in the Golden Age of mankind; they lie under the greenwood tree and tune their songs to the music of the birds; in those inaccessible forests they lose and neglect the creeping hours and become good-humored, happy, pleasantly irresponsible, and strangely susceptible to the influence of love. The whole story seems possible because of the atmosphere of the Forest of Arden, but surely it is an impossible forest with its startling combinations of fauna and flora, its palm trees and oaks, its sheep, its hungry lionesses, and its green and gilded snakes. No one can say that the action of the play needed such a setting, but without the Forest of Arden we feel that the plot and the characters would have been as childishly absurd as they are in the story from which Shakespeare borrowed them.

It must be remembered that Shakespeare created most of

his effects through poetry; he did not depend on elaborate scenic effects as the modern dramatist does. In reading a play from the modern point of view, however, we have to give a thought to the problems of the stage manager. How shall we arrange the scene for Antony's funeral oration? By what lighting effects shall we suggest the garden of Capulet where the inconstant moon "tips with silver all the fruit-tree tops?" And how shall we create an actual picture of that dim monument where lies Juliet, whose "beauty makes this vault a feasting presence full of light"? In *King Lear* how shall we produce the howling storm on the heath where the poor old man seeks shelter from the wind and the rain in a madman's hovel? How shall we portray the mysterious shadows and rounded towers of the castle at Elsinore where the ghost walks at midnight? What stage arrangement is best for the play within the play in *Hamlet?* Again, what sounds and odors shall we use? We must select music for Capulet's ball; we must reproduce the sound of the masques and merrymaking that covers up Jessica's flight from her father's, and the roar of battle that closes *Julius Cæsar* and *Macbeth*. We must furthermore choose costumes and scenery so that the colors harmonize with action and mood, at the same time making an effective stage picture. What Rosalind and Juliet shall wear is no unimportant detail. An actor's make-up for Shylock or Macbeth is often a part of his conception of the character. All these considerations are interesting and significant; one must read a play with them in mind if one is to read imaginatively. But important as they are, details of setting should never attract so much attention to themselves that they distract attention from the play and its people. There is no need to spend thousands of dollars and employ hundreds of people to present a play of any kind. Shakespeare had no conception of the useless ex-

Details of setting from the stage manager's point of view

travagance that could be lavished on a production of *Julius Cæsar* or *The Merchant of Venice.* Settings should be artistically in keeping with the mood of the story but not flagrantly conspicuous in themselves.

The Principle of Artistic Economy

The final principle in the art of playwriting is the principle of artistic economy. It is imperative that good dramatic literature observe this principle which demands that there be no waste of material, no diffusion of attention, and no lack of interest in a play. It is not too much to say that in a perfectly constructed play not a scene is unnecessary, not a character unessential, not a line without its purpose. After selecting his material, a dramatist must go over it again and again, rigorously cutting out what will not be of some dramatic service to him. Almost any fault of construction is preferable to "talkiness," futile engulfing of incident, character, and even ideas in a sea of talk. If a dramatist is to write a good play about Abraham Lincoln, as Drinkwater has, he cannot expect to show all of Lincoln's life in one evening's performance. He must select only those incidents which he thinks will most dramatically emphasize what manner of man his hero was; and he must make his selection with severe economy, no matter how attractive the unessential material may be. When Drinkwater wrote a play about Mary Stuart, he did not try to show us every fascinating incident in her career; he confined the action of his play to a single night, the night of the murder of her secretary, David Rizzio; but in that short space he managed to suggest to us his clue to the mystery of the romantic Queen of Scots. Clyde Fitch selected with an eye to dramatic emphasis the incidents which reveal the life and character of Beau Brummell. Shakespeare cannot show us the whole of Macbeth's life.

Artistic economy

Examples of artistic economy

He selects what he thinks will be most dramatically effective. There are often things we should like to know about a character in a play, but the principle of artistic economy does not permit a dramatist to gossip about his characters in the manner of Thackeray. In *Othello*, as well as in *Julius Cæsar*, there is scarcely a superfluous line. Even Shakespeare, however, is not always entirely obedient to the demands of artistic economy; much of his work is too hurried and careless for that; but the fact that the principle is constantly in evidence even in his most crowded work is sufficient proof of its vital importance.

Shakespeare and artistic economy

Watch the next play that you see, then, for its artistic economy. Does the author use his material like a careful workman, avoiding waste and useless duplication and futile digressions, or is he extravagant with it, with no regard for value and no taste for proper emphasis?

THE DRAMA AS LITERATURE OF PERMANENT VALUE

One might think that a form of composition so hampered by artificial restrictions and so dependent on the approval of the public for its support would not produce anything of permanent value. On the whole, perhaps, final oblivion is the fate of the majority of plays; nevertheless there are dramas read, studied, and acted today that were written for audiences in ancient Greece long before the birth of Christ. There is something imperishable, apparently, about the tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and the comedies of Aristophanes. It is over three hundred years since the first edition of Shakespeare's plays was published, and yet at the present time these same plays draw crowded houses. The same immortality seems inherent in the comedies of Molière in France; they will probably never cease to be read as long as the French language is read and spoken. Yet surely times have changed.

Does the drama endure?

Manners and customs are different. Theatrical conventions and theatrical equipment have made tremendous strides since the first London theater was built in 1576. Audiences that laughed at the robust satire of Aristophanes' *The Frogs* were hardly the same type of audiences that to-day crowd to see Galsworthy's *Loyalties*, Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows*, or Vane's *Outward Bound*. But these same audiences also crowd to see *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Merchant of Venice;* and our best actors and actresses like to appear in these. There must be some reason for the longevity of these perennial favorites. What is it?

To begin with, the permanent worth of a play depends in no small measure on the purpose for which it was written.

Reasons for permanent popularity

Broadly speaking, of course, all plays are written for entertainment; there is no reason why they should not be produced as long as they continue to entertain the public. In the hands of spirited actors, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The School for Scandal*, and *The Rivals* still remain good entertainment; as such they will probably continue to be revived. Probably many contemporary light comedies like Tarkington's *Clarence*, Kaufman's *Dulcy*, or Craven's *The First Year* will be revived years from now for the same reason.

A play may be of permanent value as entertainment

But most plays that live have deeper qualities than that of amusement. Many of them live for the story they tell because it is a story which is as likely to appeal to one age as to another. *Romeo and Juliet* will live because it is the story of young love; until another play manages to develop the same theme with the same lyrical intensity, it will be preëminent. *The Merchant of Venice* has an improbable story, but it is so rich in characterization and so filled with suspense that it will always be a good acting play; audiences seem never to tire of it. Any contemporary play that thus tells a good story well

A play may be of permanent value as a story

has an equal chance of longevity, unless, of course, another dramatist offers a better version of the same general theme.

Other plays live for the characters they create. *The Merchant of Venice* will live so long as there are actors because Shylock is a powerful character that can be made impressive by an actor of even average ability. *Hamlet* will always fascinate actors and audiences because the more one studies the melancholy Dane, the more interesting he becomes. *Cyrano de Bergerac* has a most compelling central figure in addition to splendor of style. *Julius Cæsar* has at least three acting parts of almost equal importance. Any actress with brains and ability is likely to wish to portray Nora Helmer in *A Doll's House*, Rebecca West in *Rosmersholm*, or Hedda Gabler in the play of that name; the very complexities and difficulties of these rôles attract them. In like manner *Beau Brummell*, *Dulcy*, *Merton Gill*, and *The Emperor Jones* offer opportunities for which any actor would be grateful. And parts like Portia, Rosalind, Beatrice, Viola, Juliet, Ophelia, Cordelia, Cleopatra, and Lady Macbeth will make up an almost inexhaustible store of opportunities for actresses for centuries to come.

A play may be of permanent value as a study of character

Some plays live purely because of their theme. The weaknesses at which Molière aimed his shafts of satire were not wholly weaknesses of his time; they are weaknesses inherent in human nature; and so long as human nature remains fundamentally unchanged, *Tartuffe*, *L'Avare*, and *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* will be of permanent value. The theme of the *Œdipus Rex* of Sophocles is an eternal one, for, like Œdipus, no man can wholly escape the common heritage of his kind. Like Hamlet, men will always find something in their natures too weak for the perfect accomplishment of the tasks set before them. Unbridled ambition, lust, jealousy, revenge,

A play may be of permanent value as an exposition of an idea

patriotism, love, and self-sacrifice will always be themes that humanity can understand; when they are set forth as powerfully as they are in *Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Othello, The Merchant of Venice, Julius Cæsar, Romeo and Juliet,* and *Measure for Measure,* there is little likelihood that the play which embodies them will ever die. On the other hand, should the problem of labor and capital be satisfactorily solved, Galsworthy's *Strife* would cease to be of permanent interest. Should the evils he attacks in *Justice* and *The Silver Box* disappear, these plays would lose their present significance. Already the aggressive feminism of some of Ibsen's heroines is becoming a bit old-fashioned; the theme of *A Doll's House,* which once caused a furore, does not now attract a passing comment. But *What Every Woman Knows* about men in the play she will probably always know; and the theme of that play will consequently be eternally interesting. The attitude toward aristocracy and democracy illustrated by *The Admirable Crichton* is a fundamental attitude, not likely to be changed by time; hence the play is likely to endure. That little masterpiece *Riders to the Sea* will be as fundamentally true a thousand years from now as it is to-day; its tragedy of simple men who are victims of the great forces of nature is likely to be an eternal one.

Examples of themes of temporary interest versus themes of permanent interest

To sum up, the real reason for permanent value in the drama, as in all literature, is the depth and truth with which it portrays thoughts and feelings and problems that are of universal significance. It is because he can thus reveal the human heart superlatively well that Shakespeare is called the greatest writer of all ages. He is unique in his power to reveal the secret places of our souls in phrase after phrase of almost miraculous insight. That is why we go back to his plays

Depth and truth the chief criteria of permanent worth in the drama

again long after their machine-made plots, their stretches of tedious foolery, and their passages of undeniable bombast have ceased to interest us. It is unlikely that any human being would ever be placed in the somewhat unbelievable situations in which the characters of *Hamlet*, for example, find themselves. But far too many human beings have felt

> "the whips and scorns of time,
> The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely
> The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes,"

and all have felt that

> "dread of something after death,
> The undiscover'd country from whose bourne
> No traveller returns,"

and have regarded with wonder

> "this most excellent canopy the air, this
> brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical
> roof fretted with golden fire."

We have all speculated with fascination on the subject of death; we have known "what 'tis to love;" we have felt the insidious grasp on our souls of that monster, habit, "who doth all sense eat"; and we, too, have felt "how weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem all the uses of the world." Indeed it has become a commonplace to say that the play of *Hamlet* covers the gamut of all the emotions, save one, that man has felt. Every man, in truth, is Hamlet; and every man sees himself in Hamlet. The conflicting emotions, the perplexities of the character are universal, hence its universal fascination. The same universal, permanent appeal is found in most of Shakespeare's plays, whether it be the rapture of young love in *Romeo and Juliet*, the irresponsible gaiety of *As You*

Like It, the boisterous good fellowship of Sir Toby and his companions "rousing the night owl with a catch" in *Twelfth Night*, the unbridled, savage outbursts of human passions and the pitiless pelting of the storm in *King Lear*, or the peaceful acquiescence of Prospero in *The Tempest:*

> "we are such stuff
> As dreams are made on; and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep."

In the last analysis, if a drama has depth and truth it will live.

EXERCISES

Exercise 1

Compare the stage directions in a contemporary play with those in a play by Shakespeare. In what respects do the stage directions in the contemporary play help the reader?

Exercise 2

Rewrite a scene from one of Shakespeare's plays adding stage directions and comments in the manner of Sir James Barrie or George Bernard Shaw. Try to make these comments an aid to the reader in visualizing scenes and characters, in understanding motives, and in catching the spirit of the play.

Exercise 3

What practical difficulties necessarily face the producer of any one of the following plays:

1. *King Lear*
2. *Macbeth*
3. *The Blue Bird*
4. *The Tempest*
5. *Julius Cæsar*
6. *Abraham Lincoln*
7. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
8. *The Emperor Jones*
9. *Saint Joan*
10. *Dear Brutus*
11. *The Adding Machine*

Exercise 4

If you were the stage-manager, what practical suggestions should you make for the arrangement of the stage, for properties, for

lighting, for the position of the actors, etc., in one of the following scenes from Shakespearean plays:

a. The casket scenes and the court room scene in *The Merchant of Venice*
b. The funeral scene and the tent scene in *Julius Cæsar*
c. The scene in the witches' cave and the banquet scene in *Macbeth*
d. The heath scenes in *King Lear*
e. The graveyard scene, the play scene, and the ghost scenes in *Hamlet*
f. The balcony scenes, the death of Mercutio, and the tomb scene in *Romeo and Juliet*

Try to find out how these scenes were produced on the stage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. If possible, get pictures, diagrams, and newspaper clippings.

Exercise 5

Look up accounts of recent productions of Shakespearean plays paying particular attention to new, or contrasting, or especially striking details in scenery, costuming, lighting, handling of crowds, securing of atmosphere, incidental music, etc. Productions by Sir Herbert Beerbohm-Tree, Sir Henry Irving, Forbes-Robertson, Walter Hampden, Robert B. Mantell, Edward H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe, John Barrymore, Jane Cowl, James K. Hackett and others will be of interest here.

Exercise 6

Study one of the following parts as if you were to be the actor or actress to play it—making notes of gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, costume, make-up, stage business, effective entrances and exits, and anything else that will help to reveal your conception of the character:

1. Hamlet
2. Brutus
3. Cassius
4. Rosalind
5. Mercutio
6. Falstaff
7. Jaques
8. Macbeth
9. Lady Macbeth
10. Malvolio
11. Viola
12. Portia
13. Shylock
14. Ophelia
15. Polonius
16. Audrey
17. Touchstone
18. Katherina
19. Celia
20. Jessica
21. Orlando

22. Juliet
23. Caliban
24. Puck
25. Sir Andrew Aguecheek
26. Lady Teazle
27. Sir Peter Teazle
28. Bob Acres
29. Tony Lumpkin
30. Mrs. Malaprop
31. The Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*
32. Beau Brummell
33. Mary Stuart
34. Mrs. Jones
35. Richelieu
36. Mélisande
37. Liliom
38. The Emperor Jones
39. Milton Shanks
40. Dulcy
41. Stephen Ghent
42. Cyrano de Bergerac
43. Clarence
44. Willie Baxter
45. Becket
46. Maggie Shand
47. Merton Gill
48. Joan of Arc

Exercise 7

Phonograph records of the following scenes from Shakespeare are available. Play one of them until you are familiar with it; then comment on this interpretation, calling attention to such details as phrasing, tempo, accentuation, dramatic emphasis, naturalness, eloquence, variety, etc.:

a. "The Seven Ages of Man" speech in *As You Like It*
b. The "To be or not to be" speech of Hamlet and his advice to the players
c. Ophelia's mad scene in *Hamlet*
d. Antony's funeral oration in *Julius Cæsar*
e. The scene between Brutus and Portia in *Julius Cæsar*
f. The Duke and Viola in *Twelfth Night*
g. The casket scene in *The Merchant of Venice*
h. The "Mercy Speech" in *The Merchant of Venice*
i. Shylock's defense in *The Merchant of Venice*
j. The balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet*
k. Two scenes between Katherina and Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew*

Exercise 8

What actor or actress whom you have seen on the stage or in the moving pictures should you like most to see in the following parts? Explain your choice.

1. Rosalind
2. Celia
3. Audrey
4. Viola
5. Olivia
6. Maria
7. Portia
8. Nerissa
9. Jessica
10. Ophelia
11. Queen Gertrude
12. Lady Macbeth

13. Desdemona
14. Cordelia
15. Regan
16. The Nurse
17. Beatrice
18. Katherina
19. Cleopatra
20. Falstaff
21. Hamlet
22. Jaques
23. Orlando
24. Macbeth
25. Brutus
26. Cassius
27. Antony
28. Romeo
29. Prince Hal
30. Touchstone
31. Benedick
32. Mercutio
33. Shylock
34. Bottom
35. Puck
36. Prospero
37. Titania
38. Sir Toby Belch
39. Andrew Aguecheek
40. Beau Brummell
41. Milton Shanks
42. Dulcy
43. Liliom
44. Maggie Shand
45. Peter Pan
46. Richelieu
47. Mary Stuart
48. Nora Helmer
49. Merton of the Movies
50. Sister Beatrice
51. Mélisande

Exercise 9

If you have not seen a professional performance of a Shakespearean play, try to find an account of the production of a Shakespearean play with a well-known actor or actress in it. Make a study of this actor's or actress's interpretation of the part. Comment especially on the use of voice, gesture, make-up, stage business, as well as the depth of insight into the character, originality, sincerity, appreciation, etc.

Exercise 10

Explain why certain parts in plays which you have read are obviously good acting parts, for example, Beau Brummell, Richelieu, Dulcy, Rosalind, the Nurse, Emilia, Hamlet, Shylock, Cassius, Lady Macbeth, Tony Lumpkin, Liliom, The Emperor Jones, Anna Christie, Paula Tanqueray, Joan of Arc, The Butler in *You Never can Tell*, The Princess in *The Swan*, Merton of the Movies, Peter Pan.

Exercise 11

Point out in one of Shakespeare's plays, parts, scenes, events, and passages which show that he had the actor's point of view.

Exercise 12

In one of Shakespeare's plays find clear evidences of the influence of the stage conditions of his time.

Exercise 13

What is the struggle which constitutes the plot of one of the following plays?

1. *Hamlet*
2. *Macbeth*
3. *Twelfth Night*
4. *Julius Cæsar*
5. *As You Like It*
6. *The Taming of the Shrew*
7. *The Merchant of Venice*
8. *The School for Scandal*
9. *The Silver Box*
10. *The Witching Hour*
11. *A Doll's House*
12. *Cyrano de Bergerac*
13. *Pelleas and Mélisande*
14. *The Emperor Jones*
15. *The Admirable Crichton*
16. *The Devil's Disciple*
17. *His House in Order*
18. *The Scarecrow*
19. *The Great Divide*
20. *Riders to the Sea*
21. *Strife*
22. *Abraham Lincoln*
23. *The Importance of Being Earnest*
24. *What Every Woman Knows*
25. *The Copperhead*
26. *Saint Joan*

Is the struggle inherent mainly in character, in social conditions, in fate, or in plot? Is it worthy of serious consideration? Is its outcome inevitable or machine-made?

Exercise 14

Point out the complicating elements in one of the following plays. Show how and when they arise. Discuss their influence on the plot and the extent to which they form a logical chain of events.

1. *The Merchant of Venice*
2. *Twelfth Night*
3. *Romeo and Juliet*
4. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
5. *Julius Cæsar*
6. *Othello*
7. *Antony and Cleopatra*
8. *Macbeth*
9. *She Stoops to Conquer*
10. *The Rivals*
11. *The Importance of Being Earnest*
12. *Dulcy*
13. *Clarence*
14. *Beau Brummell*
15. *The Copperhead*
16. *The Intimate Stranger*
17. *The Swan*
18. *Loyalties*
19. *The Silver Box*

Exercise 15

Explain how subplots are woven in with main plots in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Twelfth Night*. Which play do you consider more skillful in this respect?

Exercise 16

Julius Cæsar is a particularly well-constructed play. Study its artistic economy pointing out the dramatic necessity of each scene, character and speech. Select from it striking examples of condensation, of using means to an end, of dramatic emphasis.

Exercise 17

In one of the following plays find scenes used for contrast, for comic relief, for foreshadowing, to convey information, to establish character, to suggest lapse of time:

1. *The Merchant of Venice*
2. *As You Like It*
3. *Hamlet*
4. *Macbeth*
5. *Romeo and Juliet*
6. *Twelfth Night*
7. *Julius Cæsar*
8. *Beau Brummell*
9. *The Copperhead*
10. *Loyalties*
11. *Quality Street*
12. *His House in Order*
13. *What Every Woman Knows*
14. *The Admirable Crichton*

Exercise 18

Discuss the use of the obligatory scene in one of the following plays:

1. *The Merchant of Venice*
2. *Macbeth*
3. *Julius Cæsar*
4. *Hamlet*
5. *Romeo and Juliet*
6. *Twelfth Night*
7. *The Silver Box*
8. *A Doll's House*
9. *Cyrano de Bergerac*
10. *His House in Order*
11. *What Every Woman Knows*
12. *Quality Street*
13. *The Admirable Crichton*
14. *The Copperhead*
15. *Beau Brummell*
16. *Liliom*
17. *The First Year*
18. *The Famous Mrs. Fair*

Exercise 19

In one of the following plays which characters are created merely to fit the plot?

1. *As You Like It*
2. *A Comedy of Errors*
3. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*
4. *Beau Brummell*
5. *The Copperhead*
6. *The Bat*
7. *The Man from Home*
8. *Nice People*

Exercise 20

In one of the following plays find characters that are extraordinarily human, that rise above the plot:

1. *As You Like It*
2. *Twelfth Night*
3. *The Merchant of Venice*
4. *Hamlet*
5. *The Tempest*
6. *Much Ado About Nothing*
7. *Beau Brummell*
8. *Liliom*

Exercise 21

Show how the humanity of the character of Hamlet interferes with plot development.

Exercise 22

Discuss the skillful blending of plot and character in one of the following plays, pointing out how such a blending makes great, dominant figures impossible:

1. *The Silver Box*
2. *Julius Cæsar*
3. *What Every Woman Knows*
4. *A Bill of Divorcement*
5. *Loyalties*
6. *Outward Bound*

Exercise 23

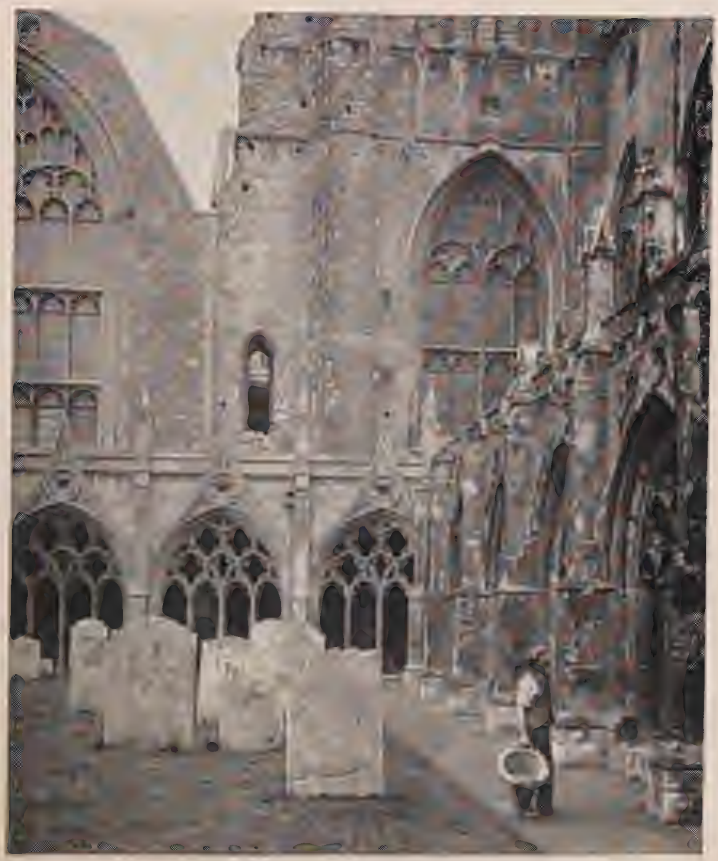
Comment on the author's management of exits and entrances in one of the following plays:

1. *As You Like It*
2. *Hamlet*
3. *Macbeth*
4. *Twelfth Night*
5. *Cyrano de Bergerac*
6. *Quality Street*
7. *What Every Woman Knows*
8. *A Doll's House*
9. *To the Ladies*
10. *Nice People*
11. *Dulcy*
12. *The Emperor Jones*
13. *Beau Brummell*
14. *The Copperhead*

Exercise 24

Write an essay on the number and range of Shakespeare's characters using only the following plays as illustrations:

A Midsummer Night's Dream — *Romeo and Juliet*
The Tempest — *Henry IV*
As You Like It — *Macbeth*
The Merchant of Venice



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Cloisters at Canterbury Cathedral, England
About this old cathedral cluster venerated traditions in English religious life.

Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art

"The Pierce-Nichols House, Salem,"
by Felicia Waldo Howell

The grace, dignity, and charm of the eighteenth century, so well represented in this old house, find adequate expression in the essays of the period.

Exercise 25

Study the character development in a moving picture. Comment on the motives and reactions of the characters. Why do they act as they do? Do they fail to be lifelike because of the exigencies of the plot? Are any of them "stock figures"? Are the situations the natural result of their characters and actions, or are they hackneyed, used merely to "put across" the story? Are the characters original? Are their problems special or universal? Which of their reactions are illuminating?

Exercise 26

Analyze one of the following characters:

1. Hamlet	6. Macbeth	11. Miranda	16. Rosalind
2. Shylock	7. Lady Macbeth	12. Lear	17. Romeo
3. Juliet	8. Brutus	13. Cordelia	18. Mercutio
4. Jaques	9. Cassius	14. The Nurse	19. Juliet
5. Falstaff	10. Caliban	15. Audrey	20. Friar Laurence

What motives determine their actions? Are these motives true to human nature? Are the actions that result from these motives consistent with the character as the dramatist has built it up? To what extent is the character influenced by other characters in the play? by circumstances over which he has no control? by his own strength or weakness? by moral principles?

Exercise 27

Discuss the dialogue of one of the following plays for its special qualities of dramatic effectiveness, necessary dramatic emphasis, relevance, intrinsic interest, power to reveal character, wit, humor, poetic charm, eloquence, realism, imagination, unreality, truth, universal significance, etc. Select passages that have value or interest in themselves apart from their connection with the plot.

1. *Hamlet*
2. *Macbeth*
3. *Henry IV*
4. *The Tempest*
5. *Romeo and Juliet*
6. *As You Like It*
7. *The Merchant of Venice*
8. *Twelfth Night*
9. *Othello*
10. *Antony and Cleopatra*
11. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
12. *Arms and the Man*
13. *Androcles and the Lion*
14. *Cæsar and Cleopatra*

15. *Cyrano de Bergerac*
16. *The Blue Bird*
17. *Saint Joan*
18. *The Pigeon*
19. *The School for Scandal*
20. *The Rivals*
21. *The Admirable Crichton*
22. *The Swan*
23. *What Every Woman Knows*
24. *Quality Street*
25. *Riders to the Sea*
26. *The Rising of the Moon*
27. *The Importance of Being Earnest*
28. *The Scarecrow*
29. *Ulysses*
30. *The Tragedy of Pompey the Great*
31. *The Emperor Jones*
32. *The Hairy Ape*
33. *A Doll's House*
34. *Peer Gynt*
35. *The Wild Duck*
36. *Abraham Lincoln*
37. *The Yellow Jacket*
38. *Pelleas and Mélisande*
39. *Beau Brummell*
40. *Will Shakespeare*

Exercise 28

Discuss the permanent worth of one of the following plays as theatrical entertainment, as a story, as a study of character, as the exposition of a theme, as intrinsic truth:

1. *Hamlet*
2. *King Lear*
3. *Tartuffe*
4. *Medea*
5. *The Frogs*
6. *Strife*
7. *Beau Brummell*
8. *Œdipus Rex*
9. *The Tempest*
10. *Julius Cæsar*
11. *Romeo and Juliet*
12. *Twelfth Night*
13. *The Blue Bird*
14. *What Every Woman Knows*
15. *A Blot on the Scutcheon*
16. *The School for Scandal*
17. *The Admirable Crichton*
18. *Riders to the Sea*
19. *Rosmersholm*
20. *The Importance of Being Earnest*
21. *Loyalties*

Exercise 29

Pick out the "stock" characters in the following plays:

1. *Beau Brummell*
2. *The Man from Home*
3. *The Return of Peter Grimm*
4. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
5. *She Stoops to Conquer*
6. *His House in Order*
7. *The Bat*
8. *Richelieu*
9. *The Fool*
10. *The Rivals*
11. *Sweet Lavender*
12. *Clarence*

Exercise 30

Discuss the principle of artistic economy (see page 328) as illustrated by these plays:

1. *Riders to the Sea*
2. *The Silver Box*
3. *Julius Cæsar*
4. *The Rising of the Moon*
5. *Beau Brummell*
7. *Outward Bound*
6. *Rosmersholm*
8. *Macbeth*
9. *Loyalties*
10. *Mary Stuart*
11. *Abraham Lincoln*
12. *Trifles*
13. *Liliom*
14. *Jane Clegg*

Exercise 31

Becket, Philip the King, Queen Mary, Henry IV, Richard III, Abraham Lincoln, Saint Joan, Beau Brummell, Pasteur, Disræli, Oliver Cromwell, Robert E. Lee, and *Will Shakespeare* are all plays which attempt to present dramatically some aspect of the life and character of an historical person. What principles must guide the dramatist in his selection of material for such a play? What traits of the protagonist's character are brought out in each of these plays? How are these traits emphasized dramatically so as to impress an audience? Compare the relative merits of these plays:

a. As a study of character
b. As practicable acting material
c. As specimens of dramatic structure
d. As literature of permanent value

Exercise 32

The Admirable Crichton, Strife, Kindling, The Melting Pot, The Silver Box, A Doll's House, A Bill of Divorcement, The Weavers, The Red Robe, R. U. R., The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, The Fool, Mixed Marriage, The Cherry Orchard, Nice People, Mary the Third are all problem plays; that is, they seek through the medium of the theater to focus attention on some social problem. In each case, what is the problem presented? what characters and circumstances cause the problem? what solution (if any) is offered? Do the problems seem natural? Do you think they would occur often in real life? or are they the special problems of particular individuals or groups of people? How are they made dramatically effective?

Are any of these plays ineffective because the problem has been cast in an inadequate dramatic mold? Have any of the problems lost their significance since the play was written? What is the effect of such a loss on the permanent value of the play?

Exercise 33

The following plays seek to present ideas dramatically:

1. *The Admirable Crichton*
2. *The Return of Peter Grimm*
3. *Androcles and the Lion*
4. *The Servant in the House*
5. *The Enchanted Cottage*
6. *The Witching Hour*
7. *The Hour Glass*
8. *The Trail of the Torch*
9. *The Madras House*
10. *The Melting Pot*
11. *The Great Galeoto*
12. *The Sunken Bell*
13. *Sister Beatrice*
14. *Outward Bound*
15. *Dear Brutus*
16. *The Pigeon*
17. *R. U. R.*
18. *Mary the Third*
19. *Kindling*
20. *The Hairy Ape*
21. *Justice*
22. *Loyalties*
23. *The Intruder*
24. *The Scarecrow*
25. *Pygmalion*
26. *What Price Glory?*
27. *The Fool*
28. *Saint Joan*
29. *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*

In each case what is the idea presented? Do you think it worth writing a play about? Is it adapted to dramatic expression? Is it a true idea? significant? Is it made dramatically effective? What scenes and characters exemplify it in some way? Does the author's eagerness to expound his ideas ever lead him to make his characters talk at the expense of dramatic action?

Exercise 34

The following plays have a satirical purpose, that is, they are making fun of something:

1. *The School for Scandal*
2. *The Way of the World*
3. *Arms and the Man*
4. *You Never Can Tell*
5. *Cæsar and Cleopatra*
6. *The Importance of Being Earnest*
7. *The Cherry Orchard*
8. *Beggar on Horseback*
9. *The Imaginary Invalid*
10. *The Affected Ladies*
11. *The Bourgeois Gentleman*
12. *Merton of the Movies*

13. *Spreading the News*
14. *Expressing Willie*
15. *Suppressed Desires*
16. *The Torch Bearers*
17. *The Show Off*
18. *To the Ladies*
19. *Dulcy*
20. *Why Marry?*
21. *The Dover Road*
22. *Clarence*
23. *Polly Preferred*
24. *Nothing but the Truth*
25. *Tartuffe*
26. *L'Avare*

In each case exactly what is ridiculed? Is the ridicule fair? deserved? What characters, scenes, and passages make the satire most apparent? Is the satire obvious? subtle? Would it be quickly felt by an audience? Is it directed against universal human weaknesses or against those of a particular age, place, or type of people? Would the play, if presented before people who most need its lesson, actually benefit them? Discuss the permanent value of each play merely as satire.

Exercise 35

The following plays attempt deliberately to teach a lesson:

1. *Beyond Human Power*
2. *The National Anthem*
3. *The Pillars of Society*
4. *The Wild Duck*
5. *Michael and His Lost Angel*
6. *The Servant in the House*
7. *The Admirable Crichton*
8. *The Faith Healer*
9. *The Hour Glass*
10. *Outward Bound*
11. *Nice People*
12. *The Truth*
13. *The Famous Mrs. Fair*
14. *Thank You*
15. *The Fool*
16. *The Blue Bird*

In each case what is the lesson? To whom is it addressed? Is it a needed one? How does the play make it forceful? Does the dramatic effectiveness of the play suffer from the author's eagerness to preach his lesson? Does the lesson come out naturally and inevitably in the play or does the play seem to be made to fit the lesson? Which characters give most direct utterance to the lesson? What is the chief danger which confronts a dramatist writing this sort of play?

Exercise 36

The following plays try to set in action for us certain universal human motives; that is, what happens in these plays is the result of conflicting human feelings and contacts which are universal:

1. *Julius Cæsar*
2. *Romeo and Juliet*
3. *Macbeth*
4. *Hamlet*
5. *Othello*
6. *King Lear*
7. *Antony and Cleopatra*
8. *All for Love*
9. *Becket*
10. *Dear Brutus*
11. *What Every Woman Knows*
12. *A Blot in the Scutcheon*
13. *Cyrano de Bergerac*
14. *Pelleas and Mélisande*
15. *Tartuffe*
16. *L'Avare*
17. *Paolo and Francesca*
18. *Monna Vanna*
19. *The Rising of the Moon*
20. *Lady Windermere's Fan*
21. *The Servant in the House*
22. *A Bill of Divorcement*
23. *Riders to the Sea*
24. *Milestones*
25. *Daddy's Gone a-Hunting*
26. *The Silver Box*
27. *The Pigeon*
28. *Loyalties*
29. *Trifles*
30. *Merton of the Movies*
31. *Jane Clegg*
32. *The Copperhead*
33. *Anna Christie*
34. *The Wild Duck*
35. *Kindling*
36. *The First Year*
37. *The Trail of the Torch*
38. *The Tragedy of Nan*
39. *Liliom*
40. *The Hairy Ape*
41. *The Emperor Jones*
42. *Ulysses*
43. *The Enchanted Cottage*
44. *The Passion Flower*
45. *The Swan*
46. *The Vale of Content*

What feelings struggle in each play? Explain wherein each is universal. Which plays seems to you likely to have the longest life because of depth, truth, universality of theme?

Exercise 37

The following plays present a character study in dramatic form. Analyze the protagonist carefully, paying special attention to his motives, reactions, and development as the play progresses. By what special means does the author present the character? What attractions does the part offer to the actor? Is the characterization complete and human enough to be of permanent value? Would the play and its protagonist appeal to an audience? Does the part need to be acted to be fully appreciated? Is the character worth studying?

1. *Hamlet*
2. *Macbeth*
3. *Becket*
4. *Queen Mary*
5. *Richelieu*
6. *Abraham Lincoln*
7. *Will Shakespeare*
8. *Mary Stuart*
9. *Disraeli*
10. *Beau Brummell*
11. *Peer Gynt*
12. *Hedda Gabler*
13. *Tartuffe*
14. *Dulcy*
15. *Lightnin'*
16. *Cyrano de Bergerac*
17. *Enter Madame*
18. *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*
19. *The Play Boy of the Western World*

CHAPTER VI

MISCELLANEOUS PROSE

THE ESSAY

History of the essay Montaigne

In 1580 a retired French lawyer, Michel de Montaigne, published two volumes of short prose compositions about his own reactions to the world he lived in. Had he realized the influence on thought and on literature this book was to have, he would not, perhaps, have said in his preface:

"Reader, loe here a well-meaning Booke. It doth at the first entrance forewarne thee . . . that I have proposed unto myselfe no other than a familiar and a private end: I have no respect or consideration at all, either to thy service, or to my glory. . . . Had my intention beene to forestal and purchase the world's opinion and favour, I would surely have adorned myselfe more quaintly, or kept a more grave and solemn march. I desire therein to be delineated in mine owne genuine, simple and ordinairie fashion, without contention, art, or study; for it is myselfe I pourtray. My imperfections shall therein be read to the life, and my naturall forme discerned, so farr-forth as publick reverence hath permitted me. . . . Thus gentle Reader myselfe am the groundworke of my booke: It is then no reason thou shouldest employ thy time about so frivolous and vaine a Subject. Therefore farewell."

Montaigne called his two volumes *Essais;* and the great body of literature for which they were the chief inspiration we know, therefore, as essays. Montaigne's subject matter is, however, by no means "frivolous and vaine" for the author speculates about many matters, among them:

Of Sadnesse or Sorrow
Of the Institution and Education of Children
Of Friendship

How We Weepe and Laugh at One Selfe-Same Thing
That A Man Ought Soberly to Meddle with Judging of Divine Laws
That Our Intention Judgeth Our Actions
That We Should Not Judge of Our Happiness until after Our Death
That to Philosophize is to Learn How to Dye

Here, then, we have a collection of fact, fancy, opinion, anecdote, legend, reflection, and all the accumulated odds and ends of a wise man's rich experience.

Here, too, we have his own "imperfections and naturall forme" revealed frankly and intimately. Monsieur de Montaigne was a man of incisive mind, who, shrewdly observant of men, paused toward the close of his life to reflect ironically, skeptically, on what it had taught him. And the sum-total of his conclusions is a shrug of his shoulders with a non-committal "*Que sais-je?*" an oft-repeated "peradventure." For he lived in a skeptical disillusioned age and was influenced by it as we all must be by the age in which we live. His endless unanswered questions, his stress on the inconsistencies, the futilities, the follies of life make him, as Andrew Lang says,

". . . a man's author, not a woman's; a tired man's, not a fresh man's. We all come to him late indeed, and rest in his panelled library."

His essays do not attempt clean-cut organization or a coherent sequence of ideas. He often wanders far afield from his starting place, following the suggestion of related ideas; these ideas in turn suggest others and these again others, until the original thought is lost. Thus in one essay he strays from reflections on why we "say God helpe to those that sneese," through an analysis of his attitude toward fear, and through diverse subjects varying from seasickness to the extravagance of kings. But this discursiveness is part of Montaigne's personality.[1]

[1] There is an interesting essay on Montaigne by Llewelyn Powys in Christopher Morley's *Modern Essays, Second Series.*

Like him or not, agree with him or not, we must recognize his influence on English literature. He was the first, not to write essays, but to give this prose form a name, and he was the first writer to adopt the easy, informal style of chatting about himself and his opinions, and his reactions to the world about him, which we have come to associate with the familar essay. Although Bacon's first twelve essays were published in 1597, a few years before Montaigne's *Essais* were translated into English, there is no doubt of the influence of Montaigne upon him. It is, then, Montaigne whom we must regard as the father of the English essay.

Montaigne's influence on the English essay

The essay is not easily defined. It may have the dignity of Bacon or the familiarity of Montaigne. Aside from the purely formal essay, which is in no sense personal, the essay is a brief record in prose of the author's personal reactions to some phase of the life about him. Montaigne says,

"It is myselfe I pourtray."

This personal note is found alike in the polished and urbane essays of Addison, the genial and appreciative essays of Irving, the discriminating essays of Agnes Repplier. The subject matter of the essay is as varied as the personalities of its authors. Not many modern essayists wander so far from the implications of the title as Montaigne, but any given volume may treat of most diverse matters. Thus Lamb's *Essays of Elia* contains, among other things, discussions of: *Ears*, *All Fool's Day*, *My Relations*, *Roast Pig*, *Dream Children*, *Chimney-Sweepers*, *Old Actors*, *Popular Fallacies*. Stevenson's *Virginibus Puerisque* has entertaining, if not profound, things to say about: *Falling in Love*, *Idlers*, *Crabbed Age and Youth*, *Walking Tours*, *Gas Lamps*. Agnes Repplier's *Points of Friction* makes incisive, if not always comforting, comments on: *Dead Authors*, *The Cheerful*

Clan, The Beloved Sinner, Money, Cruelty and Humor. A mere list of titles shows the almost unlimited scope of the essayist's material.

What an essayist has to say depends less on his subject than on his mood and his point of view. Lamb begins his essay on *Ears* with the startling announcement:

"I have no ear,"

but he hastens to add that he is not

"by nature destitute of those external twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital."

Rather is he

"delicately provided with those conduits,"

so that he feels

"no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty or the mole for her exactness in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable sable side-intelligencers."

Neither was he ever, he thanks his stars, in the pillory; nor does he think it within the compass of his destiny that he ever will be. When he says that he has no ear, he means that he has "no ear for music" and on this theme he proceeds to elaborate whimsically; and no one could foresee, himself least of all, where his whim might lead him. In *Popular Fallacies* it leads him to point out that a bully is not always a coward, that a man may laugh at his own jest, that handsome is not as handsome does, that it is often advisable to look a gift horse in the mouth, that pleasures and palaces are sometimes better than home, sweet home, that we ought not always to rise with the lark or lie down with the lamb.

The essay need not, however, deal lightly and carelessly with whims and fancies. It may be a serious, even pro-

found exposition of a subject of importance to the writer or to mankind. Such essays are Emerson's philosophical comments in *Compensation*, *Self-Reliance*, and *Friendship*. Such, too, are Ruskin's reflections in *Roots of Honour*, *Time and Tide*, and *The Mystery of Life and Its Arts*. Thus Ruskin writes of the grass:

"Consider what we owe merely to the meadow grass, to the covering of the dark ground by the companies of those soft, and countless, and peaceful spears. The fields! . . . All spring and summer is in them, the walks by silent, scented paths,—the rests in noon-day heat,—the joy of herds and flocks . . . the life of sunlight upon the world . . . pastures . . . soft banks and knolls of lowly hills, thymy slopes of down overlooked by the blue line of lifted sea, crisp lawns all dim with early dew or smooth in evening warmth of barred sunshine. . . . We may not measure to the full the depth of this heavenly gift in our own land, the infinite of that meadow sweetness. Go out, in the springtime, among the meadows that slope upon the shores of the Swiss lakes to the roots of their lower mountains. . . . Look up toward the higher hills where the waves of everlasting green roll silently in their long inlets among the shadows of the pines; and . . . at last know the meaning of those quiet words of the one hundred and forty-seventh Psalm, 'He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.'"

The essay may be a satirical or serious comment on the follies and vices of society, suave and not unkindly, as in Addison's comment on the gifted, well-meaning, but useless Will Wimble:

"I was secretly touched with compassion towards the honest gentleman . . . and could not but consider with a great deal of concern how so good a heart and such busy hands were wholly employed in trifles; that so much humanity should be so little beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. The same temper of mind and application to affairs might have recommended him to the public esteem, and have raised his fortune in another station of life. What good to his country or himself might not a trader or merchant have done with such useful though ordinary qualifications?"

or savage with bitter sarcasm as in Swift's:

"It is confidently reported that two young gentlemen of real hopes, bright wit, and profound judgment, who, upon a thorough examination of causes and effects, and by the mere force of natural abilities, without the least tincture of learning, having made a discovery that there was no God, and generously communicating their thoughts for the good of the public, were . . . by an unparalleled severity, . . . broke for blasphemy. And, as it has been wisely observed, if persecution once begins, no man alive knows how far it may reach, or where it will end."

Frequently essays are written in a spirit of quiet philosophy, such as Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn Burial*. Sometimes they are impartial discussions of political questions, such as William Howard Taft's *The Powers of the President*. Sometimes they discuss scientific discoveries, social problems, religious thought, education. All these subjects are presented with varying points of view and with varying intensity according to the mood and motive of the writer. The essay may be an account of the author's reactions to travel, such as Irving's *The Sketch Book*. It may be a sympathetic or satirical comment on some traits of human nature, such as Stevenson's *Virginibus Puerisque*. It may be a statement of the author's views on literature, art, religion, or history, such as Hazlitt's *Characters in Shakespeare's Plays*, De Quincey's *On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth* and *Joan of Arc*, Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*, and Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*. In any case it is in prose, it is comparatively brief, and it is a record of the personal feelings or views of the author on some subject that interests him.

The nature of the essay

Whatever the subject matter of the essay may be, it has certain definite characteristics. In the first place, the essay is usually *incomplete*. This does not mean that it is unfinished. Any essay is complete in itself, but it does not begin to exhaust the possibilities of

its subject matter or even of its author's reactions to that subject matter. It gives us a complete idea of the way the author wishes us to look at his subject within the limits of space and time at his disposal. Addison makes clear his point in his essay on *Party Feeling*, but he does not by any means say all that there is to be said on the subject—probably not even all that he has to say about it. Irving makes clear to us what were his chief reactions to Westminster Abbey and Stratford-on-Avon, but he cannot in the space at his disposal include all that he noticed and felt. Emerson cannot in one essay exhaust the possibilities of his ideas on compensation, nor can Macaulay, in the space allowed him for an *Encyclopedia Britannica* article, tell us all that he knows about Dr. Johnson. An essay is, then, incomplete; it is the expression of the mood, the point of view, the facts of the moment, not a complete study of the subject.

Incompleteness

In the second place, the essay reflects the mood and personality of the author. More direct than other forms of prose literature, it has more of the personal quality in it. It bears the same relation to prose that the lyric does to poetry. The author sets out directly to tell the reader what he personally thinks or feels at that particular moment, and in so doing he is bound to reveal himself. In reading the essay one has the intimate sense of following the facial expressions, the gestures, the tone of voice of the writer. We catch the bitter sneer on Swift's lips, the harsh irony of his voice, as he says of the observance of Sunday:

The essay a reflection of the mood and personality of the author

"What if men of pleasure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home instead of the chocolate-houses? are not the taverns and coffee houses open? . . . Is not that the chief day for traders to sum up accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? But I would fain know how it can be pretended that churches are misapplied? Where are more appointments and rendezvous

of gallantry? Where more care to appear in the foremost box with greater advantage of dress? where more meetings of business? where more bargains driven of all sorts? and where so many conveniences or enticements to sleep?"

The flaming scorn, the almost snarling bitterness of Swift's voice are as plainly apparent as the chuckles with which Irving tells about the Christmas music at Squire Bracebridge's church:

"The usual services of the choir were managed tolerably well, the vocal parts generally lagging a little behind the instrumental, and some loitering fiddler now and then making up for lost time by travelling over a passage with prodigious celerity. . . . But the great trial was an anthem that had been prepared and arranged by Master Simon, and on which he had founded great expectation. Unluckily there was a blunder at the very outset; the musicians became flurried; Master Simon was in a fever; everything went on lamely and irregularly until they came to a chorus beginning, 'Now let us sing with one accord,' which seemed to be a signal for parting company: all became discord and confusion; each shifted for himself, and got to the end as well, or, rather, as soon as he could, excepting one old chorister in a pair of horn spectacles, bestriding and pinching a long sonorous nose; who happened to stand a little apart, and, being wrapped up in his own melody, kept on a quavering course, wriggling his head, ogling his book, and winding all up by a nasal solo of at least three bars' duration."

And equally clear is the gentle compassion in Thackeray's voice as he tells of the lock of Stella's hair which Swift inclosed in paper marked, "Only a woman's hair":

"Do these words indicate indifference or an attempt to hide feeling? Did you ever hear or read four words more pathetic? Only a woman's hair; only love, only fidelity, only purity, innocence, beauty; only the tenderest heart in the world stricken and wounded, and passed away now out of reach of pangs of hope deferred, love insulted, and pitiless desertion:—only that lock of hair left. . . .

"And yet to have had so much love, he must have given some. Treasures of wit and wisdom, and tenderness, too, must that man

have had locked up in the caverns of his gloomy heart, and shown fitfully to one or two whom he took in there. . . . He shrank away from all affections sooner or later. . . . He broke from his fastest friend, Sheridan; he slunk away from his fondest admirer, Pope. His laugh jars on one's ear after seven score years. He was always alone—alone and gnashing in the darkness, except when Stella's sweet smile came and shone upon him. When that went, silence and utter night closed over him. An immense genius: an awful downfall and ruin. So great a man he seems to me, that thinking of him is like thinking of an empire falling."

In the essay, then, the feelings as well as the ideas of the writer are apparent. Everything is direct, informal, personal. If the writer, like Addison, is an urbane, cultured, witty gentleman of the world, that urbanity, that culture, that sophisticated wit are bound to appear. If, like Irving, he is genial, kindly, sentimental, whole-hearted, these qualities appear in his essays. The principal charm of Lamb's writings lies in the whimsical, imaginative, tender, humorous personality that shines from every page. The enthusiasms, prejudices, and idealism of Emerson can be felt directly. The rough-shod vigor of Carlyle is reflected in the jolt of his sentences and the incoherence of his exclamations. Stevenson's enthusiasms, his courage, his egotism, are all as much a part of his essays as are their subject matter.

Variety and freedom of treatment

Being personal, the essay also permits greater variety of treatment than the other forms of prose. Here are no rules, no elaborate technique, no vocabulary of terms to be studied. The essayist writes as he pleases. He may organize his material carefully and present it logically. But he is under no obligation to do so. There is for him no fixed standard. He may improvise as he sees fit. Sometimes it is difficult to find any general plan of progress in an essay—the only definite thing about it is the impression of a mood or idea illustrated in different lights from the facets of a brilliant mind; at other times the plan of

organization is obvious from the start. The style is varied, too, as varied as the subject matter and the moods of the writers. Thus we find Addison writing in a style that is both smooth and dignified:

"When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; . . . when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow; when I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together."

In a rich poetic style Sir Thomas Browne writes:

"But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the Pyramids? *Herostratus* lives that burnt the Temple of *Diana*, he is almost lost that built it; Time hath spared the Epitaph of *Adrian's* horse, confounded that of himself. In vain we compute our felicities by the advantage of our good names, since bad have equal durations. . . . Who knows whether the best of men be known? or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot, than any that stand remembered in the known account of time? Without the favour of the everlasting Register the first man had been as unknown as the last, and *Methuselah's* long life had been his only Chronicle. . . . The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the Æquinox?"

Quite different is the style of Lamb, who, even when he is not whimsical, writes with a light and delicate touch:

"Those who have only seen Mrs. Jordan within the last ten . . . years, can have no adequate notion of her performance of such parts

as . . . Viola. . . . Her joyous parts—in which her memory now chiefly lives—in her youth were outdone by her plaintive ones. There is no giving an account how she delivered the disguised story of her love for Orsino. It was no set speech, that she had foreseen, so as to weave it into an harmonious period, line necessarily following line, to make up the music—yet I have heard it so spoken, or rather *read*, not without its grace and beauty—but, when she had declared her sister's history to be a 'blank,' and that she 'never told her love' there was a pause, as if the story had ended—and then the image of the 'worm in the bud' came up as a new suggestion—and the heightened image of 'Patience' still followed after that as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. So in those fine lines—

> Write loyal cantons of contemned love—
> Halloo your name to the reverberate hills—

there was no preparation made in the foregoing image for that which was to follow. She used no rhetoric in her passion; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law."

Far removed from the bitter harshness of Swift, the whimsical sentiment of Lamb, the amused tolerance of Washington Irving, is the earnest vigor of Carlyle who writes:

"My brother, the brave man has to give his Life away. Give it, I advise thee;—thou dost not expect to *sell* thy Life in an adequate manner? What price, for example, would content thee? The just price of thy LIFE to thee,—why, God's entire Creation to thyself, the whole Universe of Space, the whole Eternity of Time, and what they hold: that is the price which would content thee; that, and if thou wilt be candid, nothing short of that! It is thy all; and for it thou wouldst have all. Thou art an unreasonable mortal;—or rather thou art a poor *infinite* mortal, who, in thy narrow clay-prison here, *seemest* so unreasonable! Thou wilt never sell thy Life, or any part of thy Life, in a satisfactory manner. Give it, like a royal heart; let the price be Nothing: thou *hast* then, in a certain sense, got All for it!"

As the essay expresses the mood and personality of its author, so it expresses the mood and personality of the age in which he lived. Like Swift, a writer may be out of sympathy with his age, but he is, in spite of himself, the creature of it. He cannot help revealing it as well as himself. He cannot write his reactions to the life about him without showing what that life was like: what men did, what things in life interested and moved them, what their ideas of literature, science, government, society, and religion were.

The essay as a reflection of its age

In the seventeenth century, when men were moved by moral and philosophical motives forgotten in the crowded excitement and adventure of the Renaissance and the Age of Discovery that had preceded, the essay was usually the expression of the writer's personal attitude toward moral, philosophical, or religious questions. Thus, Sir Francis Bacon, a contemporary of Shakespeare, writes:

"The virtue of prosperity is temperance; the virtue of adversity is fortitude. . . . Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. . . . Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed: for prosperity doth best discover vice; but adversity doth best discover virtue."

And Jeremy Taylor, the eminent divine, meditates on death:

"A man may read a sermon, the best and most passionate that ever man preached, if he shall but enter into the sepulchres of kings. In the same Escurial where the Spanish princes live in greatness and power, and decree war or peace, they have wisely placed a cemetery, where their ashes and their glory shall sleep till time shall be no more; and where our kings have been crowned, their ancestors lie interred, and they must walk over their grandsire's head to take his crown. There is an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change, from rich to naked, from ceiled roofs to arched coffins, from living like gods to die like men. . . . There the warlike and the peaceful, the fortunate and the miserable, the beloved

and the despised princes mingle their dust, and pay down their symbol of mortality, and tell all the world that, when we die, our ashes shall be equal to kings', and our accounts easier, and our pains for our crowns shall be less."

In the eighteenth century men were more interested in society and in general questions of politics and literature than in these problems of ethics and philosophy. Hence the essays of the period were social, critical, or didactic. Thus in 1753 Lady Mary Wortley Montague writes:

"You should encourage your daughter to talk over with you what she reads; . . . take care she does not mistake pert folly for wit and humor, or rhyme for poetry, which are the common errors of young people. . . . The second caution to be given her . . . is to conceal whatever learning she attains, with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness. The parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the most inveterate hatred, of all he and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of all her acquaintance."

Earlier in the century Addison expressed the perennially popular complaint against the extravagant dress of "the younger generation":

"To speak truly, the young people of both sexes are so wonderfully apt to shoot out into long swords or sweeping trains, bushy head-dresses or full-bottomed periwigs, with several other encumbrances of dress, that they stand in need of being pruned very frequently, lest they should be oppressed with ornaments and overrun with the luxuriancy of their habits."

These comments are social, tinged, like Polonius's advice to Laertes, with sensible worldliness. The purpose of the essay in the eighteenth century was not to probe serious questions, but to skim safely over the surface,

"to enliven morality with wit and to temper wit with morality."

Addison, observing that

"The mind that lies fallow but a single day sprouts up in follies that are only to be killed by a constant and assiduous culture,"

sought to introduce to a shallow people sane, but not profound ideas, to bring

"philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and closets, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and coffee-houses."

In another hundred years, men of the nineteenth century reflected in their essays the awakened love of Nature, the growth of humanitarian interest, the rapid strides of scientific discovery, and the enthusiasm for literature which characterized their age. Coleridge—not foreseeing that another generation would produce a critic like George Bernard Shaw—said:

"The Englishman who without reverence—a proud and affectionate reverence—can utter the name of William Shakespeare, stands disqualified for the office of critic."

And Hazlitt writes a very pæan of praise:

"Hamlet is a name; his speeches and sayings but the idle coinage of the poet's brain. What then, are they not real? They are as real as our own thoughts. Their reality is in the reader's mind. It is *we* who are Hamlet. This play has a prophetic truth, which is above that of history. Whoever has become thoughtful and melancholy through his own mishaps or those of others; whoever has borne about with him the clouded brow of reflection, and thought himself 'too much i' the sun'; whoever has seen the golden lamp of day dimmed by envious mists rising in his own breast, and could find in the world before him only a dull blank with nothing left remarkable in it; whoever has known 'the pangs of despised love, the insolence of office, or the spurns which patient merit of the unworthy takes'; he who has felt his mind sink within him, and sadness cling to his heart like a malady, who has had his hopes blighted and his youth staggered by the apparition of strange things; who cannot be well at ease, while he sees evil hovering near him like a spectre; whose powers of action have been eaten up by thought; he to whom the universe seems infinite, and himself nothing; whose bitterness of soul makes him careless of consequences, and who goes to a play as his best resource to shove off, to a second remove, the

evils of life by a mock representation of them—this is the true Hamlet."

But literature was not the only concern of the essayists. Ruskin was primarily interested in beauty, Carlyle in the dignity of labor, Newman in the problems of faith. History, too, came in for a share of enthusiastic interest. Thus DeQuincey writes of Joan of Arc:

"The shepherd girl that had delivered France—she, from her dungeon, she, from her baiting at the stake, she, from her duel with fire, as she entered her last dream—saw Domrémy, the fountain of Domrémy, saw the pomp of forests in which her childhood had wandered.

. . . . . .

This mission had now been fulfilled. The storm was weathered; the skirts even of that mighty storm were drawing off. The blood that she was to reckon for had been exacted; the tears that she was to shed in secret had been paid to the last. . . . And in her last fight upon the scaffold she had triumphed gloriously; victoriously she had tasted the stings of death. For all, except this comfort from her farewell dreams, she had died—died, amidst the tears of ten thousand enemies—died, amidst the drums and trumpets of armies—died, amidst peals redoubling upon peals, volleys upon volleys, from the saluting clarions of martyrs."

The essays of Thomas Huxley reflect the scientific interest of the time. Leigh Hunt, William Hazlitt, and Robert Louis Stevenson in their personal essays reflect the varied interests of themselves and their generation. Matthew Arnold developed his ideas on culture, coining such catch phrases as "sweetness and light" and "culture and anarchy."

The twentieth century essay, too, reflects its age. So far the century has been overshadowed by the Great War and its results, which challenge the existing ideas of democracy, of government, of social relationships, of education. The

contemporary essay which we find in magazines, in anthologies, and in individual collections, helps us to understand the age in which we live, an age with keen interest in literature, nature, social, political, ethical, and religious problems, science, art, and history. G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Stuart P. Sherman, Stephen Leacock, Samuel McChord Crothers, Christopher Morley, Katharine Fullerton Gerould, Agnes Repplier, Max Beerbohm, are all representative essayists of our own day.

The essay, then, is characterized by a certain incompleteness; it is the expression of a personality and a mood; it is marked by wide variety and freedom of treatment; and it is a more or less accurate reflection of the time in which it is written.

Summary

EXERCISES IN THE ESSAY

Exercise 1. The Central Idea of the Essay

There are four points of view from which an essay may be studied: its central idea, the method of treating that idea, the author's personality, and the spirit of the age as revealed by these three. The central idea is most important. Almost every essay is written to exemplify some one idea. In most of the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers* the central idea is to be found in some purpose of social reform which the authors wish to impress on their readers. Thus *Moll White* attempts to discourage the persecution of witches; *Will Wimble* to point out the absurdity of limiting the younger sons of great families to two or three professions; *Whigs and Tories* to point out the follies and dangers of the extreme party feeling which existed at that time. The most important thing, then, is to extract the central idea of an essay and, if possible, to sum it up in one sentence. Sometimes this idea is explained definitely and clearly in some paragraph of the essay; sometimes it is only implied; but until you have discovered it and expressed it for yourself, you do not really know what the essay is about. Once having understood this kernel

of the essay, you ought next to consider its truth and significance. Is this a true idea or true only from certain points of view or for certain times and certain people? If you do not agree with it, what do you consider the fallacies of the author's position? Can you make application of the idea to the life around you? If you think it is true, what leads you to think so? Can you explain the idea clearly to other people, giving illustrations within the range of your own experience? Does it suggest parallel or related ideas which you think worthy of attention? A study of the thought of any essay carried out in this way will not only assure you of mastery of the particular idea under consideration, but add to your own powers of observation and interpretation.

Exercise 2. How to Study the Method of Treatment of the Essay

Having mastered the subject matter of the essay, you are free to consider the way in which that subject matter is handled. Notice the author's method of beginning. How does he attract the interest and gain the sympathies of his reader? Has he prejudices to overcome; if he has, how does he overcome them? Does he begin with a story, with a comment that arrests immediate attention, or does he plunge at once into an exposition of his idea? As the essay proceeds do you notice a definite plan of paragraphing, or are the paragraphs arranged without any particular attention to sequence? If there is a plan of paragraphing, by what transitional devices does the writer link paragraphs together? Does he employ topic sentences? Has he a special reason for arranging his paragraphs in the order in which you find them? Does he use concrete details and illustrations to make clear any of his points? Does he use anecdotes or allusions? If so, what purpose do they serve? Are there any figures of speech, especially symbols, images, allegory, similes, or metaphors? Are they used for any particular purpose? From what sources are the figures of speech and the allusions drawn? (*i. e.* from nature, literature, art, history, politics, religion, personal experience, or what?) Does the author make much use of personal experiences? What forms of discourse does he use chiefly—description, narration, exposition, or argument? Is his essay written in the first, second, or third person? Why was this person chosen? Is the ending effective for any special reasons, such as clearness, emphasis, surprise, emotional power, logical conviction? In what sense is the essay incomplete? Notice the style. Pick out well-chosen words, examples of

figurative, poetic, or imaginative language. What qualities of humor, pathos, or imagination has it?

Exercise 3. How to Study the Author's Personality in the Essay

The next consideration should be the author's personality as revealed in the essay. This is reflected in the style as well as in the idea. Should you judge the author to be a person of wide learning, or rather special learning in some particular branch of study? What references and allusions most reveal his education? Which did you yourself have to look up? Can you tell from reading the essay anything about the author's station in life? What sort of people does he mingle with? In what branches of human activity has he had experience? In what is he specially interested? Does the essay give any clue to his temper or turn of mind? Is he imaginative or practical? Does he observe deeply or merely with close superficial attention? Does he like to draw general conclusions from what he sees? Is he humorous, whimsical, bitter, gentle, ironical, sympathetic, witty, enthusiastic, keen, profound, idealistic, disillusioned, sensible, restrained, emotional? What sort of picture could you draw of his character from what you read between the lines of the essay? In what ways does his personality affect his attitude toward the subject matter of his essay?

Exercise 4. How to Study the Life of the Times as Revealed in the Essay

Another profitable source of study in any essay is the life of the times as revealed by it. What can you learn from the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers* of the politics, religion, methods of travel, forms of amusement, classes of society, education, administration of justice, relations between capital and labor, different points of view of various classes on the same subject; superstitions; social, economic, and political abuses; literary interests; fashions; sense of humor; public spirit; country life; commerce; prejudices; bigotries; and general attitude of mind of the eighteenth century? Any one of these questions would in itself make a profitable study. These same questions can be applied to the essays of other times. Apply them to a contemporary essay by John Galsworthy, G. K. Chesterton, Agnes Repplier, Christopher Morley, or Katherine Fullerton Gerould. You will find the answers quite as illuminating.

BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Biography and *autobiography* are interesting forms of prose composition of which there are fewer great specimens than there are of the essay. A biography is the true story of a person's life as told by another. An autobiography is the true story of a person's life told by himself. *Memoirs*, which are usually written by a prominent person, are collections of facts, anecdotes, and opinions about people, places, and public events of the author's lifetime; they do not necessarily include an account of the author's life. These three forms are of genuine historical interest since they give valuable insight into the life and times of their chief characters; more than this, some of them are keen studies in human nature. A few are permanent contributions to literature.

What a biography may include

A biography or autobiography usually includes an account of the chief events of the subject's life, details about the people with whom he came in contact, accounts of the principal events of his public and private life which show his relation to the life of his times and reveal his character, and comment on the subject himself, a discussion, explanation, or defense of his character, a summing up of the value of his life to his fellowmen.

Points of view from which biography may be written

Some biographies are written merely because of the writer's personal interest in the subject; others are written because of the writer's interest in the period in which the subject lived, the problems which his life suggests, or the things in which he was interested; some are written as a tribute to or defense of the subject; others are written from a desire to make an unprejudiced, dispassionate record of a human life and its significance; still others are written for inspirational purposes. The source of the writer's interest determines the point of view from which the biography is written and the

distribution of emphasis throughout the book. Few biographies are written with absolute impartiality.

Autobiographies are similar to biographies except that the author naturally refrains from estimating his own character and achievements or interpreting his times with any pretense of finality. They are written from various motives, from the frank egotism of Benvenuto Cellini's *Autobiography* to the inspirationalism of Helen Keller's *Story of My Life* or the self-defense of Cardinal Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua.* In any case the reader must take into account the reasons for which the book was written.

Until recently the tendency in writing biography was to adopt one of two points of view. Either the biographer was frankly enthusiastic and far from judicial in his estimate of his subject; or else he strove so desperately to be impartial that his work was cold. In any case, he was beset by difficulties of assigning motives, interpreting character, and making final judgments which were at best fallible. Of recent years a new style of biography has come into existence—a style exemplified by Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* and *Queen Victoria,* by Philip Guedalla's *The Second Empire,* by Gamaliel Bradford's *The Soul of Samuel Pepys.* The tendency here is to remove the illusion of heroism and idealism that so often hampers the judgment of the inspirational biographer; and to show the subject with all the weaknesses and pettinesses that beset all human beings. It is, indeed, an attempt to show the subject in his great moments without forgetting to show him in his little moments. The biographer tries to give a fascinating psychological study of his subject; frequently his comments on what he finds are ironical and disillusioning. However brilliant such biographies are, they must be read with the same caution as the other types; it is impossible for human judgments of other human beings to be wholly fair or for human insight

Difficulties of writing biography

into human nature to be infallible. All biography should be read with sympathetic interest, but *cum grano salis.*

Methods of writing biography

There are various methods of writing biography and autobiography. They may follow a strict chronological order; or they may follow some sort of topical plan, calling attention to crises in the subject's life or to various contributions he made to the life of his times. They may view him as a member of his class or profession, as a factor in the development of his times, as an example of a theory, or simply as a human being. They may seek to include all the available facts about his life, or they may sift these facts so as to emphasize only what the writer wishes to emphasize. The interest may be in his associates, his times, his lifework, the lesson his life suggests, or just himself. Before the value of the book can be determined the method and the point of view of the writer must be discovered. Then we may judge his estimate of the man about whom he is writing.

The following questions will be helpful in judging biography or autobiography:

Exercises in the study of biography or autobiography

In the first place, what is the purpose of the book? Is it written from a spirit of hero-worship? Is it written to inspire others by showing how a life may exemplify a moral ideal? Is the interest in the subject himself or in his times? Does the life of the subject suggest problems which are of interest to the author? Is the author interested in the things that made up the subject's life, for instance, his profession, his daily problems, his books, his amusements? Is the book written as a frank tribute to some great quality or qualities in the subject? If so, how does it emphasize these qualities? Do you feel that other qualities are excluded to make the ideal ones stand out? Is the book a defense of the subject? If so, what charges are answered and what line does the defense take?

Is there evidence that the author was seeking to be impartial and dispassionate? Does he at any time reveal prejudices or predilections that make you question the judicial character of his estimates? Does he seek to explain motives? To excuse faults or to condemn them? Does he seek to interpret the psychology of his subject, to explain his acts and thoughts in that light? Does he make judgments which seem to you fair or prejudiced, wise or mistaken? Is his comment ironical? over-enthusiastic? Does he use chronological order, or does he follow some topical plan? Does he attempt to point out the value or significance of his subject's life? Does he regard him from any fixed point of view, that is, as a member of some class, an example of some type, or a factor in the development of his times; or does he regard him as just an interesting human being? Does he seek to include a wealth of material or is there evidence that he has sifted and selected the material that he has used? Does he seek to teach a lesson by means of the biography? What use does he make of portraits, illustrations, diagrams, facsimiles, quotations from sources, opinions of contemporaries, letters, diaries? Is there evidence that he has organized this material with literary skill? What literary qualities do you notice in the book? Narrative power? Dramatic skill? Power to visualize and to make real event and people? Tendency to author's comment? Humor? Emotional power? Eloquence? Vividness? Irony? Ability to select the salient and pass over the trivial? To what extent does the personality of the author influence the portrait he gives of his subject?

HISTORY

History is, of course, the written record of what man has done, attempted, thought, and felt in the past. **History** It does not properly come within the scope of this book but

as much history is actually prose literature it deserves consideration as such.

Difficulties of writing history

The difficulties of writing history are tremendous. To begin with, it involves a minute and painstaking investigation of all the facts. Once the exact facts have been obtained, they must be put together with due attention to the importance of each fact so that the course of events, the influence of one generation on another will be clearly brought out. Besides this, events and characters must be made real; yet the historian must not forget that he is writing of a period when ways of thought as well as many other things were different from what they are in his generation. He must use his imagination to project himself into the past and make it vivid to the reader, and in doing this he must not stray from the facts. Even the minutest deviations from the truth seriously mar the historian's standing among his colleagues. In addition, he must pass judgment on characters, criticize policies and events, and interpret the whole as best he can. It is easily seen that such a task involves grave difficulties. What an historian gains in force and vividness, he is likely to lose through inaccuracy or prejudice; what he gains in accuracy is at the expense of imaginative power. Recently the tendency of the historian has been to overlook minor inaccuracies for the sake of making the whole book a vivid picture of the past. Such a book is frankly personal in its judgments, interpretations, and reactions, and hence is not always a trustworthy guide. But it is more interesting reading than the strictly accurate, unimaginative account which chronicles the past without making it live for the reader. H. G. Wells's *Outline of History* and Hendrik van Loon's *The Story of Mankind* are contemporary examples of literary history which gives vivid pictures.

ORATORY

Oratory is the name given to highly impassioned speeches made on special occasions for special purposes. This form of literature was highly developed by the Greeks and Romans to whom we owe our conventional form of the oration as well as some immortal examples of oratorical literature in the speeches of Demosthenes and Cicero. The conventional form of an argumentative oration includes an introduction, a statement of the question, a main argument, carefully divided into points, a refutation, and a conclusion or peroration. There is much deviation from this form, however, as speeches for special occasions, involving no formal argument, cannot follow it closely; and as many argumentative orations disregard the classical models.

Oratory

The oration is of chief interest historically; the occasions on which such speeches were delivered have become historic, and the speeches live as records. The great orations of history, however, have a literary value. The masterly construction of an eloquent unanswerable argument deserves attention as literature. It has the qualities of attention to form, command of language, and worth of ideas that are to be found in all works of literature. Some of the more eloquent passages of oratory have become famous as examples of literary power.

Oratory as literature

TRANSLATIONS

A form of literature that seldom receives the attention it deserves is the translation. We are not accustomed to think of the translation as original work, but it surely requires more skill than the writing of an informal essay. The good translator must have a thorough knowledge of at least two languages and literatures, as well as an instinctive sense of literary appreciation; he

Difficulties of writing translations

must also have the ability to transcribe from one language to another not only the ideas, the form, and the spirit of a piece of literature, but even the subtle shades of meaning and the beauties of expression that often have no exact parallel. Few able translators get the full share of credit they deserve and still fewer attain literary distinction. Try, for example, to put into satisfactory English a passage from Virgil that appeals to you, or from Daudet, if you read French; or from Goethe, Dante, Cervantes. Your clumsy inaccuracy will perhaps exasperate you. You will then realize the full difficulty of good translation.[1]

LETTERS

Letters and diaries are not primarily artistic forms, but there are both letters and diaries that are immortal. Letters are the direct revelations of a personality and of the times in which that personality lived. They have all the charm of intimate, personal, easy expression even when they have no literary merit; if they are the work of a literary artist, they make the most fascinating of reading. The letters of Lord Chesterfield, of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, of Horace Walpole, of Stevenson, of Whistler, are among the permanent treasures of our literature. Diaries, of course, are even more intimate personal revelations. The most famous of diaries, that of Samuel Pepys, astoundingly unconscious and frank, is invaluable as a picture of the times in which Pepys lived, —to say nothing of its imperishable greatness as a record of human nature. Perhaps you would like to read *The Soul of Samuel Pepys*, by Gamaliel Bradford, a most interesting introduction to the man and his book.

[1]An excellent example of artistic translation is "Readings from the Literature of Ancient Greece and Rome in English Translations," by Dora Pym, New York, 1923.

APPENDIX I

READING LISTS

A. THE NOVEL

Aldrich, Thomas Bailey	The Story of a Bad Boy
Austen, Jane	Pride and Prejudice
" "	Emma
" "	Sense and Sensibility
Balzac, Honoré de	Eugénie Grandet
Barrie, Sir James M.	Sentimental Tommy
" " " "	The Little Minister
Bazin, René	Children of Alsace
Bennett, Arnold	Old Wives' Tale
Blackmore, Richard	Lorna Doone
Borrow, George	Lavengro
Brontë, Charlotte	Jane Eyre
Brontë, Emily	Wuthering Heights
Bulwer-Lytton, Sir Edward	The Last Days of Pompeii
Burney, Frances	Evelina
Canfield, Dorothy	The Bent Twig
Cather, Willa	My Antonia
" "	The Song of the Lark
" "	Youth and the Bright Medusa
Clemens, Samuel (Mark Twain)	Huckleberry Finn
" " " "	Tom Sawyer
" " " "	Pudd'nhead Wilson
Conrad, Joseph	Lord Jim
" "	The Nigger of the *Narcissus*
" "	Typhoon
" "	Chance
" "	The Arrow of Gold
Cooper, James Fenimore	The Last of the Mohicans
" " "	The Spy
Crane, Stephen	The Red Badge of Courage

Crawford, F. Marion	Mr. Isaacs
" " "	Saracinesca
" " "	The White Sister
Defoe, Daniel	Robinson Crusoe
De la Mare, Walter	The Three Mulla-Mulgars
De Morgan, William	Joseph Vance
" "	Somehow Good
" "	Alice-for-Short
Dickens, Charles	David Copperfield
" "	Oliver Twist
" "	Great Expectations
" "	Nicholas Nickleby
" "	Our Mutual Friend
" "	Martin Chuzzlewit
" "	Bleak House
" "	A Tale of Two Cities
Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan	The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
" " " "	The White Company
Dumas, Alexandre	The Three Musketeers
" "	The Count of Monte Cristo
" "	The Black Tulip
Eliot, George	The Mill on the Floss
" "	Romola
" "	Adam Bede
" "	Middlemarch
" "	Silas Marner
Ferber, Edna	So Big
France, Anatole	The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard
Gale, Zona	Miss Lulu Bett
Galsworthy, John	The Forsyte Saga
Gaskell, Mrs. Elizabeth	Cranford
Goldsmith, Oliver	The Vicar of Wakefield
Grahame, Kenneth	The Wind in the Willows
Halévy, Thomas	The Abbé Constantin
Hamsun, Knut	Growth of the Soil
Hardy, Thomas	Far from the Madding Crowd
" "	Under the Greenwood Tree
" "	The Return of the Native
" "	Tess of the D'Urbervilles
Hawes, Charles Boardman	The Mutineers

Hawes, Charles Boardman	The Great Quest
" " "	The Dark Frigate
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	The Marbel Faun
" "	The Scarlet Letter
" "	The House of the Seven Gables
Hémon, Louis	Maria Chapdelaine
Hewlett, Maurice	The Life and Death of Richard Yea and Nay
" "	The Forest Lovers
Howells, William Dean	A Chance Acquaintance
" " "	A Hazard of New Fortunes
" " "	A Modern Instance
" " "	The Rise of Silas Lapham
Hudson, W. H.	Green Mansions
Hugo, Victor	The Hunchback of Notre Dame
" "	Ninety-three
" "	Toilers of the Sea
James, Henry	Roderick Hudson
" "	The American
" "	The Portrait of a Lady
" "	Daisy Miller
Johnston, Mary	To Have and to Hold
" "	1492
Kingsley, Charles	Westward Ho!
" "	Hereward the Wake
Kipling, Rudyard	Kim
" "	The Light that Failed
Lewis, Sinclair	Main Street
" "	Babbitt
Locke, William J.	Septimus
" " "	The Belovèd Vagabond
London, Jack	The Call of the Wild
" "	The Sea Wolf
Marryat, Captain	Mr. Midshipman Easy
" "	Masterman Ready
Melville, Herman	Typee
" "	Moby Dick
Meredith, George	The Ordeal of Richard Feverel
" "	Diana of the Crossways
" "	The Egoist
Merrick, Leonard	Cynthia

Merrick, Leonard	The Actor-Manager
" "	Conrad in Quest of his Youth
Mérimée, Prosper	Colomba
Mulock, Dinah (Mrs. Craik)	John Halifax, Gentleman
Newman, Cardinal	Callista
" "	Loss and Gain
Norris, Frank	The Octopus
" "	The Pit
Ollivant, Alfred	Bob, Son of Battle
Parker, Sir Gilbert	The Right of Way
Poole, Ernest	The Harbor
" "	His Family
Reade, Charles	The Cloister and the Hearth
Sabatini, Rafael	Captain Blood
" "	The Sea Hawk
Scott, Sir Walter	The Talisman
" " "	Kenilworth
" " "	Quentin Durward
" " "	Ivanhoe
" " "	The Heart of Midlothian
" " "	Old Mortality
" " "	Guy Mannering
" " "	Rob Roy
Smith, Sheila Kaye	Sussex Gorse
" " "	The End of the House of Alard
Stevenson, Robert Louis	Treasure Island
" " "	Kidnapped
" " "	The Master of Ballantrae
" " "	The Black Arrow
Stockton, Frank R.	Rudder Grange
Swift, Jonathan	Gulliver's Travels
Tarkington, Booth	Alice Adams
" "	The Turmoil
" "	The Magnificent Ambersons
" "	Monsieur Beaucaire
Thackeray, William Makepeace	Vanity Fair
" " "	Henry Esmond
" " "	The Virginians
" " "	Pendennis
" " "	The Newcomes
Trollope, Anthony	Barchester Towers

Turgenev, Ivan	Fathers and Sons
Wells, H. G.	Tono Bungay
" " "	Mr. Britling Sees It Through
" " "	Joan and Peter
White, Stewart Edward	The Blazed Trail
White, William Allen	A Certain Rich Man
Wharton, Edith	Ethan Frome
" "	The House of Mirth
" "	The Age of Innocence
" "	A Son at the Front
Wister, Owen	The Virginian

B. THE SHORT STORY

1. *Anthologies of short stories*

Ashmun, Margaret	Modern Short Stories
" "	Prose Literature for Secondary Schools
Brewster, W. T.	Specimens of Narration
Campbell, O. J., and Rice, A. R.	A Book of Narratives
Freck, Laura F.	Short Stories of Various Types
Fuess, Claude M.	Selected Short Stories
Heydrick, B. A.	Types of the Short Story
" " "	Americans All
Jessup, A., and Canby, H. S.	The Book of the Short Story
Jessup, Alexander	Representative American Short Stories
Mikels, Rosa	Short Stories for High Schools
O'Brien, E. J.	The Year Book of the American Short Story
O. Henry Memorial Award	Prize Stories, Chosen by Society of Arts and Sciences
Pence, R. W.	Short Stories by Present Day Authors
Robinson, K. G.	Contemporary Short Stories
Sherman, Stuart, P.	American Short Stories
Thomas, C. S., and Paul, G. P.	Story, Essay and Verse
Waite, Alice, and Taylor, Edith	Modern Masterpieces of Short Prose Fiction

Nutter, C. R., and others	Specimens of Prose Composition

2. *Collections of individual authors*

Allen, James Lane	Flute and Violin
Barrie, Sir James M.	Auld Licht Idylls
Bierce, Ambrose	Can Such Things Be?
Blackwood, Algernon	The Listener
Brown, Alice	Tiverton Tales
Bunner, H. C.	Short Sixes
Burke, Thomas	Limehouse Nights
Cable, George W.	Old Creole Days
Conrad, Joseph	Tales of Unrest
Cutting, Mary Stewart	Little Stories of Married Life
Davis, Richard Harding	The Bar Sinister
De la Mare, Walter	The Riddle
Deland, Margaret	Old Chester Days
" "	Dr. Lavender's People
Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan	The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
Fox, John, Jr.	Blue Grass and Rhododendron
" " "	Christmas Eve on Lonesome
Gale, Zona	Friendship Village
Garland, Hamlin	Main Travelled Roads
Gerould, Katharine Fullerton	Vain Oblations
Gerould, Katharine Fullerton	Valiant Dust
Gissing, George	The House of Cobwebs
Grahame, Kenneth	The Golden Age
" "	Dream Days
Hardy, Thomas	Wessex Tales
Harris, Joel Chandler	Nights with Uncle Remus
Harte, Bret	The Luck of Roaring Camp
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	Mosses from an Old Manse
Henry, O.	The Four Million
" "	The Trimmed Lamp
" "	Whirligigs
Hewlett, Maurice	Little Novels of Italy
Jewett, Sarah Orne	Tales of New England
" " "	The Queen's Twin
" " "	A Native of Winby
Kelly, Myra	Little Citizens

Kipling, Rudyard	Plain Tales from the Hills
" "	Under the Deodars
" "	Soldiers Three
" "	The Day's Work
" "	The Phantom Rickshaw
" "	The Jungle Books
" "	Traffics and Discoveries
Lagerlöf, Selma	The Girl from the Marsh Croft
London, Jack	Love of Life
" "	The God of his Fathers
" "	The Sign of the Wolf
" "	South Sea Stories
Mansfield, Katherine	Bliss
" "	The Garden Party
Matthews, Brander	Vignettes of Manhattan
Morrison, Arthur	Divers Vanities
Murfree, Mary N.	The Dancing Party at Harrison's Cove
Page, Thomas Nelson	In Ole Virginia
Poe, Edgar Allan	Tales
Poushkin, Alexander	Prose Tales
Sedgwick, Anne Douglas	Christmas Roses
Smith, F. Hopkinson	A Day at Laguerre's
Tarkington, Booth	Penrod
" "	Penrod and Sam
Tchekov, Anton	The Duels
" "	The Cook's Wedding
Thanet, Octave	Stories of a Western Town
" "	The Heart of Toil
Turgenev, Ivan	A Sportsman's Sketches
Van Dyke, Henry	The Ruling Passion
" " "	The Blue Flower
Wharton, Edith	Crucial Instances
White, Stewart Edward	Blazed Trail Stories
White, William Allen	The Real Issue
" " "	The Court of Boyville
Wilkins-Freeman, Mary E.	A Humble Romance

3. *Famous Short Stories of Various Nations*

a. American and British

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow	Washington Irving

Rip Van Winkle	Washington Irving
The Fall of the House of Usher	Edgar Allan Poe
Ligeia	" " "
The Black Cat	" " "
A Descent into the Maelstrom	" " "
The Masque of the Red Death	" " "
The Pit and the Pendulum	" " "
The Purloined Letter	" " "
The Murders in the Rue Morgue	" " "
The Gold Bug	" " "
The Cask of Amontillado	" " "
The Great Stone Face	Nathaniel Hawthorne
Ethan Brand	" "
The Ambitious Guest	" "
The Minister's Black Veil	" "
Drowne's Wooden Image	" "
The Birthmark	" "
Rappaccini's Daughter	" "
The White Old Maid	" "
Feathertop	" "
The Great Carbuncle	" "
The Gentle Boy	" "
Dr. Heidegger's Experiment	" "
The Luck of Roaring Camp	Bret Harte
The Outcasts of Poker Flat	" "
Tennessee's Partner	" "
M'liss	" "
Marjorie Daw	Thomas Bailey Aldrich
Quite So	" " "
Goliath	" " "
A Sisterly Scheme	Henry Cuyler Bunner
The Nice People	" " "
Zenobia's Infidelity	" " "
The Love Letters of Smith	" " "
The Cumbersome Horse	" " "
Our Aromatic Uncle	" " "
The Man Without a Country	Edward Everett Hale
A White Heron	Sarah Orne Jewett

Miss Tempy's Watchers	Sarah Orne Jewett
A Winter Courtship	" " "
A Native of Winby	" " "
A Municipal Report	O. Henry
A Chaparral Christmas Gift	" "
A Blackjack Bargainer	" "
The Gift of the Magi	" "
The Chaparral Prince	" "
The Hiding of Black Bill	" "
The Unfinished Story	" "
A Retrieved Reformation	" "
The Furnished Room	" "
The Third Ingredient	" "
The City of Dreadful Night	" "
The Ransom of Red Chief	" "
The King of Boyville	William Allen White
The Martyrdom of Mealy Jones	" " "
Marse Chan	Thomas Nelson Page
Meh Lady	" " "
Posson Jone	George W. Cable
A Kitchen Colonel	Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman
The Revolt of Mother	" " " "
A New England Nun	" " " "
The Shadows on the Wall	" " " "
A Village Singer	" " " "
Told in the Poor-house	Alice Brown
Herman's Ma	" "
Farmer Eli's Vacation	" "
What Was It?	Fitzjames O'Brien
Miss Hinch	Henry Sydnor Harrison
The Lady of Shalott	Elizabeth Stuart Phelps
A Kentucky Cardinal	James Lane Allen
Among the Corn Rows	Hamlin Garland
The Duchess at Prayer	Edith Wharton
Gallegher	Richard Harding Davis
Mrs. Knollys	F. J. Stimson
A Source of Irritation	Stacy Aumonier
The Liar	Henry James
The Turn of the Screw	" "
The Real Thing	" "

Brooksmith	Henry James
Four Meetings	" "
A Jury of Her Peers	Susan Glaspell
One Hundred in the Dark	Owen Johnson
The Other Wise Man	Henry van Dyke
The Lotus Eaters	Virginia Tracy
The Upper Berth	F. Marion Crawford
Philosophy Four	Owen Wister
The Lady or the Tiger	Frank R. Stockton
A Tale of Negative Gravity	" " "
Pigs Is Pigs	Ellis Parker Butler
A Lodging for the Night	Robert Louis Stevenson
The Sire de Malétroit's Door	" " "
The Pavilion on the Links	" " "
Will o' the Mill	" " "
Olalla	" " "
Thrawn Janet	" " "
The House with the Green Blinds	" " "
The Merry Men	" " "
Markheim	" " "
The Rajah's Diamond	" " "
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde	" " "
The Man Who Would Be King	Rudyard Kipling
The Man Who Was	" "
Without Benefit of Clergy	" "
Baa, Baa, Black Sheep	" "
Wee Willie Winkie	" "
"They"	" "
The Brushwood Boy	" "
The Phantom Rickshaw	" "
The Story of Muhammed Din	" "
Namgay Doola	" "
Moti Guj—Mutineer	" "
The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes	" "
At the End of the Passage	" "
Bertram and Bimi	" "
William the Conqueror	" "
"Rikki-tikki-tavi"	" "

The Nuremberg Stove	Louise de la Ramée (Ouida)
A Dog of Flanders	" " " " "
The Signal Man	Charles Dickens
A Child's Dream of a Star	" "
The Apparition of Mrs. Veal	Daniel Defoe
On the Stairs	Arthur Morrison
The Black Badger	" "
Teacher and Taught	" "
The Damned Thing	Ambrose Bierce
The Withered Arm	Thomas Hardy
The Three Strangers	" "
The Monkey's Paw	W. W. Jacobs
The Lady of the Barge	" " "
A Change of Treatment	" " "
The Courting of Tnowhead's Bell	Sir James M. Barrie
How Gavin Birse Put It to Mag Lownie	" " " "
Gilray's Flower Pot	" " " "
Youma	Lafcadio Hearn
The Garden Party	Katherine Mansfield

b. French

A Piece of String	Guy de Maupassant
The Beggar	" " "
Happiness	" " "
The Necklace	" " "
The Two Friends	" " "
La Mère Sauvage	" " "
The Costly Ride	" " "
A Coward	" " "
On the River	" " "
La Grande Bretèche	Honoré de Balzac
A Passion in the Desert	" " "
Christ in Flanders	" " "
The Substitute	François Coppée
At Table	" "
The Last Class	Alphonse Daudet
La Belle Nivernaise	" "
The Old Folks	" "
The Woman of Arles	" "
The Pope's Mule	" "

The Three Low Masses	Alphonse Daudet
The Mothers	" "
The Pope Is Dead	" "
The Little Pies	" "
Monsieur Seguin's Goat	" "
The White Chapel	Jules Lemaître
The Venus of Ille	Prosper Mérimée
Mateo Falcone	" "
Carmen	" "
The Dead Leman	Théophile Gautier
The Mummy's Foot	" "
A Simple Heart	Gustave Flaubert
The Attack on the Mill	Emil Zola

c. German

In St. Jürgen	Theodore Storm
Immensee	" "
The Rider on the White Horse	" "
A Cremona Violin	E. T. W. Hoffmann
Good Blood	Ernst von Wildenbruch
A New Year's Confession	Hermann Sudermann
The Goosehead	" "
L'Arrabbiata	Paul Heyse
The Fur Coat	Ludwig Fulda
The Stone Breakers	F. von Saar

d. Russian

A Lear of the Steppes	Ivan Turgenev
A Living Relic	" "
An Unhappy Girl	" "
Domestic Happiness	Leo Tolstoy
The Snow Storm	" "
Master and Man	" "
The Death of Ivan Ilyitch	" "
The Long Exile	" "
Children Wiser Than Their Elders	" "
The Thief	F. M. Dostoevski
Twenty-six and One	Maxim Gorky
The Song of the Falcon	" "
The Red Flower	V. M. Garshin
The Signal	" " "

The Cloak	N. V. Gogol
The Slanderer	Anton Tchekov
The Safety Match	" "
The Queen of Spades	Alexander Poushkin
The Shot	" "
The Coffin-Maker	" "

e. Scandinavian

The Legend of the Christmas	Selma Lagerlöf
The Outlaws	" "
The Christmas Guest	" "
The Silver Mine	" "
The Father	Björnstjerne Björnson
Railroad and Churchyard	" "
Love and Bread	August Strindberg
The Phoenix	" "
Irene Holm	H. B. Bang
The Rector of Veilbye	Steen Steensen Blicher

f. Spanish and Italian

Luck	Pedro de Alarcón
The Stranger	" " "
The Nail	" " "
The Tall Woman	" " "
The Three-Cornered Hat	" " "
El Señor	Leopolda Alas
An Aged Youth	" "
Fortuna	E. I. Esarich
The Silver Crucifix	Antonio Fogazzaro
The End of Candia	Gabriel d'Annunzio

C. DRAMA

1. *Collections of plays*

Baker, George P.	Modern American Plays
Björkman, Edwin	The Modern Drama Series
Clark, Barrett H.	Three Modern Plays from the French
Cohen, Helen Louise	One-Act Plays by Modern Authors
" " "	Longer Plays by Modern Authors
" " "	The Junior Play Book
Dickinson, Thomas H.	Chief Contemporary Dramatists 1st series and 2d series

Drama League Series of Plays	
Knickerbocker, Edwin V. B.	Plays for Classroom Interpretation
Leonard, S. A.	The Atlantic Book of Modern Plays
Lewis, B. R.	Contemporary One-Act Plays
Mantle, Burns	Year Book of the American Drama
Matthews, Brander	Chief European Dramatists
Mayorga, Margaret	Representative One-Act Plays by American Authors
Moses, Montrose J.	Representative British Dramas
" " "	Representative Continental Dramas
Neilson, W. A.	Chief Elizabethan Dramatists
Pierce, John A.	Masterpieces of Modern Drama (abridged)
Quinn, Arthur H.	Representative American Plays
Shay, Frank, and Loving, Pierre	Fifty Contemporary One-Act Plays
Sherwood, Robert E.	Year Book of the Motion Picture
Smith, Alice M.	Short Plays by Representative Authors
Theatre Guild Library of Plays	
Webber, J. M., and Webster, H. H.	One-Act Plays for Secondary Schools

2. *Individual plays*

Akens, Zoë	Daddy's Gone a-Hunting
Andreyeff, Leonid	The Sabine Women
" "	The Black Maskers
Anspacher, Louis K.	The Unchastened Woman
Barrie, Sir James M.	The Admirable Crichton
" " " "	Quality Street
" " " "	What Every Woman Knows
" " " "	Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire
" " " "	Peter Pan
" " " "	A Kiss for Cinderella
" " " "	Dear Brutus

Barrie, Sir James M.	The Legend of Leonora
" " " "	Mary Rose
" " " "	Half-Hours
" " " "	Echoes of the War
Barker, Granville	The Madras House
Barry, Philip	You and I
Beach, Lewis	The Goose Hangs High
Becque, Henri	The Crows
Belasco, David	The Return of Peter Grimm
Benavente, Jacinto	The Bonds of Interest
" "	La Malquérida (The Passion Flower)
" "	The Evil Doers of Good
" "	Autumnal Roses
Bennett, Arnold	Polite Farces
" "	Milestones
Bernstein, Henri	The Thief
Björnson, Björnstjerne	Love and Geography
" "	Beyond Human Power
" "	The Editor
" "	The Bankrupt
" "	The King
" "	Laboremus
Boucicault, Dion	London Assurance
Brieux, Eugène	The Red Robe
Browning, Robert	A Blot on the Scutcheon
" "	Pippa Passes
" "	In a Balcony
Byron, George Gordon, Lord	Manfred
Bulwer-Lytton, Sir Edward	Richelieu
Capek, Karel	R. U. R.
Chambers, C. Haddon	Passers-By
Colum, Padraic	Thomas Muskerry
Congreve, William	The Way of the World
Craven, Frank	The First Year
Crothers, Rachel	39 East
" "	Nice People
" "	Mary the Third
" "	Expressing Willie
Dane, Clemence	A Bill of Divorcement
" "	Will Shakespeare

Dane, Clemence	The Way Things Happen
Drinkwater, John	Abraham Lincoln
" "	Robert E. Lee
" "	Mary Stuart
" "	Oliver Cromwell
Dryden, John	All for Love
Dunsany, Lord	The Glittering Gate
" "	If
" "	The Gods of the Mountain
" "	Plays of Gods and Men
Echegaray, José	The Great Galeoto
Ervine, St. John	Mixed Marriage
" " "	Jane Clegg
" " "	The Lady of Belmont
Eyre, Laurence	The Merry Wives of Gotham
Fitch, Clyde	The Truth
" "	The Girl with the Green Eyes
" "	Beau Brummell
Forbes, James	The Famous Mrs. Fair
Galsworthy, John	The Silver Box
" "	The Eldest Son
" "	Justice
" "	Strife
" "	The Pigeon
" "	The Skin Game
" "	Loyalties
Giacosa, Giuseppe	The Stronger
" "	Like Falling Leaves
" "	Sacred Ground
Glaspell, Susan	Trifles
" "	Suppressed Desires
Goldsmith, Oliver	She Stoops to Conquer
" "	The Good-Natured Man
Gregory, Lady	New Comedies
" "	The Rising of the Moon
" "	The Workhouse Ward
" "	Spreading the News
Guitry, Sacha	Pasteur
Hauptmann, Gerhart	Hannele
" "	The Sunken Bell
" "	The Weavers

Hazelton, G. C., & Benrimo	The Yellow Jacket
Houghton, Stanley	Hindle Wakes
Howells, William Dean	The Elevator
" " "	The Parlor Car
" " "	The Sleeping Car
Housman, Laurence	Prunella
" "	The Chinese Lantern
Housum, Robert	The Gypsy Trail
Hugo, Victor	Hernani
Ibsen, Henrik	A Doll's House
" "	The Pillars of Society
" "	An Enemy of the People
" "	The Wild Duck
" "	Rosmersholm
" "	Hedda Gabler
" "	Peer Gynt
Jones, Henry Arthur	The Case of Rebellious Susan
" " "	Michael and his Lost Angel
Kaufman, George S., and Connelly, Marc	Dulcy
Kaufman, George S., and Connelly, Marc	To the Ladies
Kaufman, George S., and Connelly, Marc	Merton of the Movies
Kaufman, George S., and Connelly, Marc	Beggar on Horseback
Kelly, George	The Torch Bearers
" "	The Show-off
Kennedy, Charles Rann	The Servant in the House
Kenyon, Charles	Kindling
Kummer, Clare	Good Gracious Annabelle
" "	Be Calm Camilla
" "	A Successful Calamity
" "	The Robbery
Lytton, E. Bulwer	Richelieu
McCarthy, J. H.	If I Were King
Mackaye, Percy	The Scarecrow
Maeterlinck, Maurice	The Blind
" "	Aglavaine and Selysette
" "	The Intruder
" "	The Blue Bird

Maeterlinck, Maurice	Pelleas and Mélisande
" "	Sister Beatrice
" "	Monna Vanna
Manners, J. Hartley	The National Anthem
" " "	Happiness
Masefield, John	The Tragedy of Nan
" "	Philip the King
" "	The Tragedy of Pompey the Great
" "	Good Friday
Mason, A. E. W.	Green Stockings
Milne, A. A.	The Dover Road
" " "	Mr. Pim
" " "	The Truth About Blayds
Molière	Tartuffe
"	L'Avare
"	Le Malade Imaginaire
"	Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme
"	Le Médecin Malgré Lui
"	Les Précieuses Ridicules
Molnar, Ferenc	Liliom
" "	The Swan
Montgomery, James	Nothing but the Truth
Moody, William Vaughn	The Faith Healer
" " "	The Great Divide
Noyes, Alfred	Sherwood
O'Neill, Eugene	The Emperor Jones
" "	The Hairy Ape
" "	Anna Christie
Parker, Louis N.	Pomander Walk
" " "	A Minuet
" " "	Disraeli
Peabody, Josephine Preston	The Piper
" " "	The Wolf of Gubbio
Phillips, Stephen	Ulysses
" "	Paolo and Francesca
Pinero, Sir Arthur Wing	The Second Mrs. Tanqueray
" " " "	Sweet Lavender
" " " "	The Thunderbolt
" " " "	His House in Order
" " " "	The Amazons

Pinero, Sir Arthur Wing	The Enchanted Cottage
Pollock, Channing	The Fool
Racine, Louis	Athalie
" "	Phèdre
" "	Esther } translated by
" "	Berenice } John Masefield
Rice, Elmer	The Adding Machine
Rinehart, Mary R., and Hopwood, Avery	The Bat
Rostand, Edmond	Cyrano de Bergerac
" "	L'Aiglon
" "	Chanticler
Saunders, Louise	Magic Lanterns
Shakespeare, William	A Midsummer Night's Dream
" "	The Comedy of Errors
" "	The Taming of the Shrew
" "	Much Ado About Nothing
" "	As You Like It
" "	Twelfth Night
" "	The Merchant of Venice
" "	The Tempest
" "	A Winter's Tale
" "	Cymbeline
" "	Richard II
" "	Richard III
" "	Henry IV, Part I
" "	Henry IV, Part II
" "	Henry V
" "	Romeo and Juliet
" "	Julius Cæsar
" "	Hamlet
" "	Macbeth
" "	Othello
" "	King Lear
" "	Antony and Cleopatra
" "	Coriolanus
Shaw, George Bernard	Arms and the Man
" " "	Cæsar and Cleopatra
" " "	Fanny's First Play
" " "	Man and Superman
" " "	Pygmalion

Shaw, George Bernard	The Devil's Disciple
" " "	You Never Can Tell
" " "	Androcles and the Lion
" " "	Candida
" " "	Saint Joan
Sheldon, Edward	Romance
" "	The Boss
Sheridan, Richard Brinsley	The Rivals
" " "	The School for Scandal
Smith, Harry J.	A Tailor Made Man
" " "	Mrs. Bumpstead Leigh
Strindberg, August	Easter
" "	The Father
Sudermann, Hermann	Magda (Die Heimat)
" "	The Vale of Content
" "	The Far-Away Princess
Synge, J. M.	Riders to the Sea
" " "	The Play Boy of the Western World
" " "	The Shadow of the Glen
" " "	The Tinker's Wedding
" " "	The Well of the Saints
Tarkington, Booth	Clarence
" "	Seventeen
" "	The Man from Home
" "	The Intimate Strangers
" "	The Wren
Tchekov, Anton	The Cherry Orchard
" "	The Sea Gull
" "	The Three Sisters
Tennyson, Alfred, Lord	Harold
" " "	Becket
" " "	Queen Mary
Thomas, A. E.	Only 38
" " "	Come Out of the Kitchen
Thomas, Augustus	The Witching Hour
" "	As a Man Thinks
" "	The Copperhead
Vane, Sutton	Outward Bound
Varesi, Gilda, and Byrne, Dolly	Enter Madame

Veiller, Bayard	The Thirteenth Chair
Wilde, Oscar	The Importance of Being Earnest
" "	Lady Windermere's Fan
Yeats, William Butler	Cathleen ni Houlihan
" " "	Deirdre of the Sorrows
" " "	The Hour Glass
" " "	The Land of Heart's Desire
" " "	The King's Threshold
" " "	The Shadowy Waters
Zangwill, Israel	The Melting Pot
" "	Merely Mary Ann

D. POETRY

1. *Anthologies*

Boynton, Percy H.	American Poetry
" " "	Selected Poems
Braithwaite, W. S.	The Book of Elizabethan Verse
" " "	The Golden Treasury of Magazine Verse
Children's Hour Series	Poems
De la Mare, Walter	Come Hither
Elliott, G. R., and Foerster, N.	English Poetry of the 19th Century
Forbes, Anita	Modern Verse
Fuess, C. M., and Stearns, H. C.	The Little Book of Society Verse
Fuess, C. M., and Sanborn	English Narrative Poems
Gayley, C. M., Young, C. C., and Kurtz, B. P.	English Poetry, Its Principles and Progress
Gordon, Margery, and King, Marie	Verse of Our Day
Harvard Classics	English Poetry (3 vols.)
Hubbell, J. B., and Beatty, J. O.	An Introduction to Poetry
Kilmer, Joyce	Dreams and Images
Monroe, Harriet, and Henderson, Alice	The New Poetry
Meynell, Alice	The School of Poetry

Page, Curtis Hidden	Chief American Poets
Palgrave, F. T.	The Golden Treasury
Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur	The Oxford Book of English Verse
Richards, Mrs. Waldo	High Tide
" " "	The Melody of Earth
" " "	Star Points
Rittenhouse, Jessie	The Little Book of American Verse
" "	The Second Little Book of American Verse
Squire, J. C.	Anthology of American Verse
Stedman, E. C.	American Anthology
" " "	Victorian Anthology
Teasdale, Sara	Anthology of Poems for Women
Thompson, Daniel	British Verse for Boys
Untermeyer, Louis	Modern American Poetry
" "	Modern British Poetry
" "	Modern Poetry: American and British
Van Dyke, Henry	The Poetry of Nature
Van Dyke, Henry, and Craig, Hardin	A Book of British and American Verse
Wiggin, Kate Douglas, and Smith, Nora A.	Golden Numbers
Wilkinson, Marguerite	New Voices
" "	Contemporary Poetry

2. *Poems of some length and collections by individual authors*

Adams, Franklin P.	Tobogganing on Parnassus
" " "	Overset
Arnold, Matthew	Collected Poems
" "	Sohrab and Rustum
" "	The Strayed Reveller
" "	The Forsaken Merman
" "	The Scholar Gypsy
" "	Thyrsis
" "	Balder Dead
" "	Rugby Chapel
Bates, Katharine Lee	The Retinue, and Other Poems

Benét, William Rose	Merchants from Cathay
Blake, William	Songs of Innocence
" "	Songs of Experience
Branch, Anna Hempstead	The Shoes That Danced, and Other Poems
Brooke, Rupert	Poems
Browning, Elizabeth Barrett	Sonnets from the Portuguese
Browning, Robert	Selected Poems
" "	Dramatic Monologues
" "	Dramatis Personae
" "	Men and Women
" "	The Ring and the Book
Burns, Robert	Complete Poems
Bynner, Witter	Grenstone Poems
Byron, George Gordon, Lord	The Bride of Abydos
" " " "	The Prisoner of Chillon
" " " "	Childe Harold's Pilgrimage
Carman, Bliss	The Green Book of the Bards
Carman, Bliss, and Hovey, Richard	Songs from Vagabondia
Carman, Bliss, and Hovey, Richard	More Songs from Vagabondia
Carman, Bliss, and Hovey, Richard	Last Songs from Vagabondia
Cather, Willa	April Twilights
Chaucer, Geoffrey	The Canterbury Pilgrims
" "	A Legend of Good Women
" "	Troilus and Criseyde
Chesterton, G. K.	Lepanto
" " "	Poems
Childe, Wilfred Rowland	The Gothic Rose
Cleghorn, Sarah	Portraits and Protests
Coates, Florence Earl	Poems
Coleridge, S. T.	The Ancient Mariner
" " "	Christabel
" " "	Kubla Khan
" " "	Collected Poems
Colum, Padraic	Wild Earth, and Other Poems
Daly, Thomas A.	Songs of Wedlock
" " "	Carmina
" " "	Canzoni

De la Mare, Walter	Poems
" " " "	Peacock Pie
" " "	A Child's Day
Dickinson, Emily	Poems
Dobson, Austin	Collected Poems
Drinkwater, John	Poems, 1908–1914
Dryden, John	Alexander's Feast
" "	The Hind and the Panther
Field, Eugene	Lullaby Land
Fletcher, John Gould	The Tree of Life
Frost, Robert	A Boy's Will
" "	North of Boston
" "	Mountain Interval
" "	New Hampshire
Goldsmith, Oliver	The Deserted Village
Gray, Thomas	Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard
Guiney, Louise Imogen	Collected Poems
Guiterman, Arthur	The Laughing Muse
" "	The Mirthful Lyre
Hagedorn, Hermann	The Heart of Youth
Hardy, Thomas	Moments of Vision
Henley, William Ernest	Collected Poems
Housman, A. E.	A Shropshire Lad
" " "	Last Poems
Hovey, Richard	Along the Trail
" "	Launcelot and Guenevere
Hueffer, Ford Madox	On Heaven, and Poems Written in Active Service
Keats, John	The Eve of St. Agnes
" "	Odes
" "	Hyperion
" "	Endymion
" "	Lamia
" "	Collected Poems
Kilmer, Aline	Candles That Burn
Kilmer, Joyce	Trees, and Other Poems
" "	Collected Poems
Kipling, Rudyard	Barrack Room Ballads
" "	Collected Poems
Kreymborg, Alfred	Mushrooms

Lang, Andrew	Ballads and Lyrics of Old France
" "	New Collected Rhymes
Le Gallienne, Richard	English Poems
Lindsay, Vachel	The Congo, and Other Poems
" "	The Chinese Nightingale
Longfellow, Henry W.	Evangeline
" " "	Tales of a Wayside Inn
" " "	The Song of Hiawatha
" " "	Collected Poems
Lowell, Amy	Legends
" "	Tales of Men, Women, and Ghosts
" "	Sword Blades and Poppy Seeds
Lowell, James Russell	The Vision of Sir Launfal
" " "	Collected Poems
Macaulay, Thomas Babington	Lays of Ancient Rome
Markham, Edwin	The Man with the Hoe, and Other Poems
Masefield, John	August 1914
" "	The Daffodil Fields
" "	Dauber
" "	The Everlasting Mercy
" "	Enslaved
" "	Reynard the Fox
" "	Right Royal
" "	Salt Water Ballads
Marquis, Don	Dreams and Dust
" "	Noah an' Jonah an' Cap'n John Smith
Masters, Edgar Lee	The Spoon River Anthology
Meredith, George	Modern Love
Meynell, Alice	Poems
Middleton, Scudder	The New Day
Millay, Edna St. Vincent	Renascence, and Other Poems
Milton, John	Paradise Lost
" "	Minor Poems
Moody, William Vaughn	Poems
Morley, Christopher	The Rocking Horse
Morris, William	The Defence of Guenevere
" "	The Earthly Paradise

Neihardt, John G.	The Quest
Nichols, Robert	Out of the Trenches
Norton, Grace Fallow	The Sister of the Wind
Noyes, Alfred	Collected Poems
" "	Drake
" "	The Flower of Old Japan
" "	The Forest of Wild Thyme
" "	Tales of the Mermaid Tavern
Peabody, Josephine Preston	The Singing Leaves
Phillips, Stephen	Poems
" "	Marpessa
" "	Christ in Hades
Pope, Alexander	The Rape of the Lock
" "	An Essay on Man
" "	An Essay on Criticism
Riley, James Whitcomb	Child Rhymes
" " "	Farm Rhymes
Rittenhouse, Jessie	The Door of Dreams
Robinson, Edwin Arlington	Lancelot
" " "	Merlin
" " "	The Man Against the Sky
" " "	The Town Down by the River
" " "	Collected Poems
Rossetti, Christina	Selected Lyrics
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel	Poems
" " "	The King's Tragedy
" " "	The House of Life
" " "	Ballads and Sonnets
Sandburg, Carl	Chicago Poems
" "	Cornhuskers
Santayana, George	Poems
Sassoon, Siegfried	The Old Huntsman, and Other Poems
Scollard, Clinton	Poems
Scott, Sir Walter	Ballads
" " "	The Lady of the Lake
" " "	Marmion
" " "	The Lay of the Last Minstrel
Seeger, Alan	Poems
Shakespeare, William	Sonnets
" "	Songs from the Plays

Shelley, Percy Bysshe	Prometheus Unbound
" " "	Adonais
" " "	Selected Lyrics
Stevenson, Robert Louis	A Child's Garden of Verses
" " "	Collected Poems
Swinburne, Algernon Chas.	Collected Poems
" " "	Tristram of Lyonesse
" " "	Poems and Ballads
Tagore, Rabindranath	Gitanjali
" "	Fruit-Gathering
Teasdale, Sara	Love Songs
" "	Flame and Shadow
Tennyson, Alfred, Lord	Idylls of the King
" " "	Maud
" " "	Enoch Arden
" " "	The Princess
" " "	In Memoriam
" " "	Collected Poems
Thomas, Edith M.	The Flower from Ashes
Tietjens, Eunice	Profiles from China
Untermeyer, Louis	Challenge
Wells, Carolyn	Nonsense Anthology
" "	Whimsy Anthology
Wheelock, John Hall	Dust and Light
" " "	The Black Panther
Whitman, Walt	Collected Poems
" "	Leaves of Grass
Whittier, John Greenleaf	Snowbound
" " "	Collected Poems
Widdemer, Margaret	Factories, and Other Poems
" "	The Old Road to Paradise
" "	A Tree with a Bird in It
Woodberry, George Edward	The Flight, and Other Poems
Wordsworth, William	Complete Poems
" "	Michael
" "	Tintern Abbey
" "	Ode on Intimations of Immortality
Wylie, Elinor	Black Armour
Yeats, William Butler	The Wild Swans of Coole, and Other Poems
" " "	Poems

E. NON-FICTION

1. *Anthologies of essays*

Alden, R. M.	Essays, English and American
Atlantic Classics	Essays—First Series
" "	Essays—Second Series
Boas, Ralph Philip	Youth and the New World
Berdan, J. M., Schultz, J. R., and Joyce, H. E.	Modern Essays
Cody, Sherwin	Selections from the Best English Essays
Everyman's Library	A Century of English Essays
Friess, C. M.	Selected Essays
Heydrick, B. A.	Types of the Essay
Morley, Christopher	Modern Essays for Schools
Pritchard, F. H.	Essays of To-day
Tanner, William M.	Essays and Essay Writing
Thomas, C. S., and Paul, G. P.	Story, Essay and Verse

2. *Essays*

Arnold, Matthew	The Study of Poetry
" "	Essays in Criticism
Addison, Joseph	Sir Roger de Coverley Papers
"Aguecheek"	My Unknown Chum
Bacon, Francis	Essays
Bagehot, Walter	Literary Essays
Belloc, Hilaire	First and Last
Bennett, Arnold	Fame and Fiction
" "	Literary Taste and How to Form It
Benson, A. C.	From a College Window
Burroughs, John	Pepacton
" "	Riverby
" "	Wake Robin
" "	Winter Sunshine
Carlyle, Thomas	Heroes and Hero Worship
Chesterton, G. K.	Alarms and Discursions
" " "	All Things Considered
" " "	Heretics
" " "	Tremendous Trifles
Crothers, Samuel	The Gentle Reader

Crothers, Samuel	By the Christmas Tree
DeQuincey, Thomas	Collected Essays
Dobson, Austin	Eighteenth Century Vignettes
Dryden, John	Essays in Dramatic Criticism
Gerould, Katharine Fullerton	Modes and Morals
Gissing, George	The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft
Grayson, David	Adventures in Contentment
" "	" " Friendship
Hazlitt, William	Essays
Holmes, Oliver Wendell	The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table
Howells, William Dean	Imaginary Interviews
" " "	Italian Journeys
" " "	Literature and Life
Hunt, Leigh	Essays
James, William	Memories and Studies
Lamb, Charles	Essays of Elia
Lang, Andrew	Letters to Dead Authors
Landor, Walter Savage	Imaginary Conversations
Lucas, E. V.	Fireside and Sunshine
Leacock, Stephen	Literary Lapses
Mabie, Hamilton W.	American Ideals
" " "	Backgrounds of Literature
Macaulay, Thos. Babington	Essay on Johnson
" " "	" " Milton
" " "	" " Madame D'Arblay
" " "	" " Clive
" " "	" " Addison
" " "	" " Warren Hastings
Matthews, Brander	Inquiries and Opinions
Meynell, Alice	The Colour of Life
Newman, Cardinal	The Idea of a University
Perry, Bliss	Books and Men
Repplier, Agnes	The Fireside Sphinx
" "	Points of Friction
Ruskin, John	Sesame and Lilies
" "	Modern Painters
" "	Stones of Venice
" "	Crown of Wild Olive

Sharp, Dallas Lore	The Face of the Fields
" " "	The Fall of the Year
" " "	A Watcher in the Woods
Smith, Alexander	Dreamthorp
Stevenson, Robert Louis	An Inland Voyage
" " "	Travels with a Donkey
" " "	Virginibus Puerisque
" " "	Memories and Portraits
Thackeray, Wm. Makepeace	The English Humorists
" " "	The Four Georges
Thoreau, Henry D.	Walden
Van Dyke, Henry	Little Rivers
" " "	Fisherman's Luck
Warner, Charles Dudley	A-Hunting the Deer
" " "	Lost in the Woods
" " "	Camping Out
" " "	What Some People Call Pleasure
White, Stewart Edward	The Cabin
" " "	The Forest
" " "	The Mountains
Yeats, William Butler	First and Last

F. BOOKS ABOUT LITERATURE

Andrews, C. E.	The Reading and Writing of Verse
" " "	The Drama of To-day
Archer, William	The Old Drama and the New
" "	Playmaking
Bennett, Arnold	Literary Taste and How to Form It
Boas, Ralph Philip, and Hahn, Barbara	Social Backgrounds of English Literature
Burton, Richard	How to See a Play
Canby, Henry S.	Definitions
Chapman, John Jay	Letters and Religion
" " "	A Glance Toward Shakespeare
Chesterton, G. K.	Fancies versus Fads
Clark, Barrett	The British and American Drama of To-day

Cross, Wilbur	Development of the English Novel
Cunliffe, John W.	English Literature During the Last Half-Century
Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan	Through the Magic Door
Esenwein, J. Berg	Studying the Short Story
Follett, Wilson	Some Modern Novelists
Hamilton, Clayton	The Theory of the Theatre
" "	Problems of the Playwright
" "	A Manual of the Art of Fiction
Hearn, Lafcadio	Essays in European and Oriental Literature
" "	Lectures on Literature
Henderson, Archibald	The Changing Drama
Howells, William Dean	Literature and Life
" " "	Heroines of Fiction
James, Henry	The Art of Fiction
Lamborn, E. A. Greening	The Rudiments of Criticism
Lewisohn, Ludwig	The Drama and the Stage
Lowes, J. L.	Convention and Revolt in Poetry
MacCracken, H. N., Pierce, F. E., and Durham, W. H.	An Introduction to Shakespeare
Matthews, Brander	Aspects of Fiction
" "	The Principles of Playmaking
Murry, J. Middleton	Countries of the Mind
Neilson, William Allan	Essentials in Poetry
Noyes, Alfred	Some Aspects of Modern Poetry
Perry, Bliss	A Study of Prose Fiction
" "	A Study of Poetry
Phelps, William Lyon	The Advance of the English Novel
" " "	Essays on Modern Novelists
" " "	" " " Dramatists
Pritchard, F. H.	Training in Literary Appreciation
Raleigh, Walter	Some Authors
Repplier, Agnes	Books and Men
Rich, Mabel Irene	A Study of the Types of Literature
Ruhl, Arthur	Second Nights
Sherman, Stuart P.	On Contemporary Literature

Smith, C. Alphonso	What Can Literature Do for Me?
Strachey, Lytton	Books and Characters
Van Dyke, Henry	Companionable Books
Winchester, C. T.	Some Principles of Literary Criticism
" " "	An Old Castle and Other Essays

G. BIOGRAPHY

Barrie, Sir James M.	Margaret Ogilvy
Balfour, Graham	Robert Louis Stevenson
Barrington, E.	"The Ladies!"
Beer, Thomas	Stephen Crane
Bok, Edward W.	A Man from Maine
Boswell, James	Samuel Johnson
Bianchi, Martha	The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson
Bradford, Gamaliel, Jr.	Lee, the American
" " "	Damaged Souls
" " "	The Soul of Samuel Pepys
Brandes, George	William Shakespeare
Charnwood, Lord	Abraham Lincoln
" "	Theodore Roosevelt
Chamberlain, Frederick	The Private Character of Queen Elizabeth
Chesterton, G. K.	Charles Dickens
" " "	St. Francis of Assisi
Colvin, Sidney	John Keats
Cornish, F. W.	Jane Austen
Cross, J. W.	George Eliot
Dark, Sidney	The Life of W. S. Gilbert
Fausset, Hugh	Tennyson, A Modern Portrait
Gardiner, A. G.	The Life of Sir William Harcourt
Gaskell, Elizabeth	Charlotte Brontë
Greenslet, Ferris	Thomas Bailey Aldrich
" "	James Russell Lowell
Grossman, E. B.	Edwin Booth
Guedalla, Philip	The Second Empire (Napoleon III)
Hagedorn, Hermann	The Boys' Life of Theodore Roosevelt

Hawthorne, Julian	Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife
Hendrick, Burton J.	The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page
Howells, William Dean	My Mark Twain
Irving, Washington	Oliver Goldsmith
Lee, Sidney	Shakespeare's Life and Work
Legros, C. V.	Fabre, Poet of Science
Lucas, E. V.	Charles Lamb
MacCunn, F. A.	Mary Stuart
McElroy, Robert	Grover Cleveland
Masson, Rosaline	The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson
Maurois, André	Ariel, a Life of Shelley
Morley, John	Cromwell
Nicolay, J. G.	A Short Life of Lincoln
Noyes, Alfred	William Morris
Palmer, G. H.	Alice Freeman Palmer
Page, Thomas Nelson	Robert E. Lee, Man and Soldier
Papini, Giovanni	The Life of Christ
Parkman, Francis	La Salle
Parsons, F. M.	Garrick and His Circle
Perry, Bliss	Walt Whitman
Raleigh, Walter	Shakespeare
Robinson, Corinne Roosevelt	My Brother, Theodore Roosevelt
Rose, J. H.	Life of Napoleon
Sergeant, Philip W.	The Life of Anne Boleyn
Schurz, Carl	Abraham Lincoln
Shorter, Clement	Charlotte Brontë and Her Sisters
Sinclair, May	The Three Brontës
Stewart, John A.	Robert Louis Stevenson
Strachey, Lytton	Eminent Victorians
" "	Queen Victoria
Tarbell, Ida M.	A Boy's Life of Lincoln
" " "	In the Footsteps of the Lincolns
Van Dyke, Paul	Catherine de Medicis
Werner, M. R.	Barnum
White, Wm. Allen	Woodrow Wilson
Woodberry, G. E.	Edgar Allan Poe

H. AUTOBIOGRAPHY, MEMOIRS, HISTORY, ETC.

Addams, Jane	Twenty Years at Hull House
Aldrich, Mrs. Thomas Bailey	Crowding Memories
Antin, Mary	The Promised Land
Asquith, Margot	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography
Barton, Clara H.	The Story of My Childhood
Bernhardt, Sarah	Memories of My Life
Bok, Edward	The Americanization of Edward Bok
Brandes, George	Reminiscences of My Childhood and Youth
Burroughs, John	My Boyhood
Calvé, Emma	My Life
Clemens, Samuel (Mark Twain)	Autobiography
Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur	Memories and Adventures
Damrosch, Walter	My Musical Life
Depew, Chauncey M.	My Memories of Eighty Years
Drew, John	My Life on the Stage
Egan, Maurice Francis	Recollections of a Happy Life
Eliot, Charles W.	A Late Harvest
Farington, Joseph	The Farington Diary
Garland, Hamlin	A Son of the Middle Border
Gompers, Samuel	Seventy Years of Life and Labor
Gosse, Edmund	Father and Son
Hale, E. E.	A New England Boyhood
Hall, G. Stanley	Life and Confessions of a Psychologist
Holt, Henry	Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor
Howells, William Dean	Literary Friends and Acquaintances
Hudson, W. H.	Far Away and Long Ago
Huneker, James G.	Steeplejack
James, Henry	A Small Boy and Others
Jefferson, Joseph	Autobiography
Keller, Helen	Story of My Life
Larcom, Lucy	A New England Girlhood
Lewisohn, Ludwig	Upstream
Lynn, Margaret	A Stepdaughter of the Prairie

Matthews, Brander	These Many Years
Morris, Clara	Life on the Stage
Muir, John	The Story of My Boyhood and Youth
Newman, John Henry, Cardinal	Apologia pro Vita Sua
Osbourne, Lloyd	An Intimate Portrait of R. L. S.
Page, Roswell	Thomas Nelson Page—A Memoir
Pepys, Samuel	Diary
Pupin, Michael I.	From Immigrant to Inventor
Repplier, Agnes	In Our Convent Days
Riis, Jacob	The Making of an American
Roosevelt, Theodore	Autobiography
Skinner, Otis	Footlights and Spotlights
Sothern, E. H.	The Melancholy Tale of Me
Stanley, H. M.	Autobiography
Stevenson, R. L.	Vailima Letters
Strachey, John St. Loe	The Adventure of Living
Terry, Ellen	The Story of My Life
Tetrazzini, Luisa	My Life of Song
Thomas, Augustus	My Print of Remembrance
Ward, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps	Chapters from a Life
Wiggin, Kate Douglas	My Garden of Memory
Wilson, Francis	Francis Wilson's Life of Himself
Yeats, William Butler	Reveries of Childhood and Youth
Yung, Wing	My Life in China and America

I. MISCELLANEOUS

Adams, Henry	Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres
Andrews, C. E.	Old Morocco and the Forbidden Atlas
Bangs, John Kendrick	Half Hours with the Idiot
Beebe, William	Jungle Peace
" "	Galápagos: World's End
Benchley, Robert C.	Of All Things
Borrow, George	The Bible in Spain
Chapman, John Jay	Letters and Religion
Clemens, Samuel L.	Innocents Abroad
Conklin, George	Ways of the Circus
Cooper, Courtney Ryley	Under the Big Top
Curtis, George W.	Public Duty of Educated Men

Dana, R. H.	Two Years Before the Mast
Derieux, Samuel A.	Animal Personalities
Downes, Olin	The Lure of Music
Enders, Elizabeth C.	Singing Lanterns
Franck, Harry	Zone Policeman 88
Gerould, Katharine F.	Hawaii, Scenes and Impressions
Grady, Henry W.	The New South
Grayson, David	The Friendly Road
Grenfell, Wilfred T.	A Labrador Doctor
" " "	Adrift on an Ice Pan
Hale, Louise Closser	We Discover New England
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	The Sea Port Towns of New England
Heine, Heinrich	Pictures of Travel
Henderson, Wm. J.	What Is Good Music?
Hornaday, William T.	The Minds and Manners of Wild Animals
Hudson, W. H.	The Purple Land
Hearn, Lafcadio	Out of the East
Husband, Joseph	America at Work
Krehbiel, Henry E.	How to Listen to Music
Lange, Algot	In the Amazon Jungle
Leacock, Stephen	Nonsense Novels
" "	Behind the Beyond
Lincoln, Abraham	Speech at Cooper Institute
" "	The First Inaugural Speech
Lucas, E. V.	A Wanderer Among Pictures
Macaulay, Thomas B.	Speech on Copyright
McCormick, Elsie	Audacious Angles on China
Morley, Christopher	Mince Pie
" "	Parnassus on Wheels
Muir, John	A Thousand Mile Gulf
Mukerji, Dhan Gopal	Caste and Outcast
Newton, Joseph F. (ed.)	Best Sermons of 1924
O'Higgins, H. J.	Smoke Eaters
Paine, Albert Bigelow	The Tent Dwellers
Parker, DeWitt H.	The Principles of Æsthetics
Phelps, Wm. Lyon	As I Like It
Phillips, Wendell	Toussaint L'Ouverture
Polo, Marco	Travels
Rinehart, Mary Roberts	The Out Trail

Roosevelt, Theodore	Americanism
" "	African Game Trails
" "	Through the Brazilian Wilderness
Royden, A. Maude	Beauty in Religion
Schauffler, Robert Haven	Fiddler's Luck
Scholes, Percy	The Listener's Guide to Music
Schurz, Carl	True Americanism
Seldes, Gilbert	The Seven Lively Arts
Smith, E. R.	Education Moves Ahead
Stevenson, Robert Louis	Travels with a Donkey
" " "	An Inland Voyage
Stoddard, John L.	Lectures on Travels
Watkins, Mary F.	First Aid to the Opera-Goer
Wharton, Edith	A Motor Flight Through France
White, Stewart Edward	The Mountains

J. DIARIES

Pepys, Samuel	Diary
Evelyn, John	Diary and Correspondence
Swift, Jonathan	Journal to Stella
Burney, Fanny	Diary and Letters
Napoleon	The Corsican: the Diary of Napoleon
De Guérin, Eugénie	Journal
Bashkirtseff, Marie	Journal of a Young Artist, 1860–1884
Ames, Mary	From a New England Woman's Diary in Dixie in 1865
Barbellion, W. N. P.	Journal of a Disappointed Man

K. LETTERS

Chesterfield's Letters to His Son
Letters of Susan Hale
Letters of William James
Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett
Letters of Franklin K. Lane
Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague
Letters of Mme. de Sévigné
Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson

Voltaire in His Letters
Letters of Horace Walpole
The Love Letters of Abelard and Héloïse
Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife
Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning
Love Letters of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welsh
Some Old Puritan Love Letters
Selected Letters
Letters from Many Pens
Nineteenth Century Letters
Letters of Archie Butt

APPENDIX II

EXERCISES ON STANDARD READINGS

A. *Kidnapped*, by Robert Louis Stevenson

1. Show clearly by example and illustration in what ways the beginning of this story is well handled. What two things, at least, does it do which every beginning should do?

2. Write an essay showing the ways by which suspense is secured. Be sure to include illustrations of such devices as surprise, foreshadowing, effective chapter endings, description, and withheld information.

3. Discuss the method of narration used. Show by example the advantages and disadvantages of telling this story in the first person. Show also how Stevenson advances the story rapidly from one episode to the next. Show how each episode is a little narrative in itself, working through various complications and crises up to a climax.

4. Discuss *Kidnapped* as a typical story of adventure through travel. What characteristics has it which are found in most stories of this type? (Fights, pursuits, disasters, disappointments, concealments, meetings with interesting characters, narrow escapes, etc., are incidents common to such stories. Compare the story with a modern "best-seller" of the same type—such as *Scaramouche* or *The Broad Highway*).

5. Show that, although *Kidnapped* is frankly a story of adventure, it is a human record. Point out the large part that human nature plays in the development of the plot, and the interest that the reader feels in the human quality of David's and Alan's adventures. What little touches in the book seem especially human? (*e. g.* David's experiences on the island are particularly human. They have the same human quality as Robinson Crusoe's experiences in building his boat).

6. Show by illustration how Stevenson takes pains to individualize interestingly even his minor characters. Give examples of people met by David in his journey who are interesting in themselves even

though they have no close connection with the plot. Illustrate Stevenson's tendency to make a character stand out by emphasizing minor peculiarities of voice, gait, appearance, etc.

7. Write an essay on the use of minor characters in this story.

8. Discuss in some detail the human as well as the romantic qualities of David and Alan as revealed in their natural inconsistencies, motives, and reactions. In what ways do they make an interesting contrast?

9. Find examples of character revealed by description, incidents, dress, conversation, comment of others, analysis, little touches. What seem to be Stevenson's favorite methods? Compare Stevenson and George Eliot in this respect.

10. Discuss the influence of setting on plot and characters. Which scenes could not well have occurred in a different setting? Which characters show especially the imprint of the time and place in which they exist? Has the setting any charm of its own apart from its connection with story and character?

11. Which scenes seem especially romantic, that is, in tune with the mood of the story?

12. Find examples of setting revealed by description, local customs or superstitions, costumes, dialect, historical allusions, historical characters.

13. Discuss, with examples, Stevenson's power of rapid, vivid narration as shown in *Kidnapped*.

14. Analyze Stevenson's descriptions. What is his descriptive method? For what purposes does he use description? Find examples of his fondness for specific words—to convey exactly sounds, colors, scents, facial expressions, gestures, feelings, atmosphere, touch.

15. Find examples in *Kidnapped* of Stevenson's power to portray weariness and all sorts of physical discomfort and suffering.

16. Explain and illustrate from *Kidnapped* three qualities of effective description.

17. Do you think that Stevenson goes below the surface of life or does his power lie in chiseling out vivid superficial impressions? Is he concerned with moral issues, problems of human conduct, difficulties in human experience, mysteries of existence? Compare him with George Eliot in this respect; with Thackeray; with Dickens; with Thomas Hardy; with George Meredith; with Joseph Conrad. Sum up as well as you can the attitude of each of these authors toward his art and toward the life about him which his art

attempts to represent. Which of them do you think has made the most permanent contribution to literature?

18. In what respects is the ending of *Kidnapped* somewhat unsatisfactory? Does the sequel, *David Balfour*, supply the defect?

B. *Treasure Island*, by Robert Louis Stevenson

The questions for *Kidnapped* are so selected that, with very few changes, they can be made to apply to *Treasure Island*. Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, and 16 can be applied to *Treasure Island* with almost no change.

C. *Ivanhoe*, by Sir Walter Scott

1. Investigate the history of *Ivanhoe*. The circumstances under which it was written are interesting, and can hardly fail to awaken your admiration for the author. They serve, too, to explain some of the carelessness apparent in the book.

2. Investigate the historical background of the story. Find out about the historical troubles between the Normans and the Saxons. Learn all that you can about the characters of Richard I and Prince John. Investigate the legend of Robin Hood. Wherein has Scott changed history to suit his purposes? What reasons can you give for such changes? What rather unhistorical emphasis is given to the character of Richard?

3. If you have seen the moving picture *Robin Hood*, write a brief essay showing how it helped you to visualize certain scenes in *Ivanhoe*. What special scenes, settings, characters, costumes, or properties could you identify in your imagination with similar ones in *Ivanhoe?* What historical aspects of the story were made more real to you by the picture?

4. *Ivanhoe* would make an effective moving picture. Write a scenario of such a picture. What should you have to leave out? How should you arrange the scenes to secure continuity, increasing excitement, and dramatic emphasis? What details of costuming and grouping should you try to make effective? What settings could you make attractive?

5. Investigate Scott's knowledge of history and legend. What were the sources of this knowledge? In what side of history was he especially interested? Find, if you can, the source of the name Ivanhoe; of the stories of Locksley, Prince John, and Richard; of the

scene between Richard and the Clerk of Copmanhurst; of the story of Rebecca and Isaac; of the conversation between Gurth and Wamba about Norman and Saxon names. All these facts help to reveal the interests, the mind, and the personality of the author; and they show how many things go into the writing of a story. Write an essay on the author and his work, using the case of Scott and *Ivanhoe* as an example. Investigate some of Scott's other historical novels in the same way.

6. Write an essay on Sir Walter Scott as an antiquarian, showing how *Ivanhoe* reveals the author's interest in old costumes, armor, weapons, utensils, furniture, castles, architecture, sports, etc. Show also how Scott gratified his antiquarian interest by introducing unnecessary details about such things.

7. Discuss *Ivanhoe* as an historical novel, calling attention to such details as use of material, adaptation of style to the period of history treated, use of historical scenes, costumes, accessories, episodes, and characters. Is the interest mainly in the historical background and characters, or in the imaginary characters who make up the main plot? Compare *Ivanhoe* with *The Talisman*, *Quentin Durward*, and *Kenilworth* in this respect.

8. How many stories are used in the plot of *Ivanhoe?* How are they combined so that the action of the whole novel is unified?

9. Discuss the method of narration of *Ivanhoe*. Show how the interest is centered about three more or less detached episodes (the tournament, the storming of Torquilstone, and the trial of Rebecca). Show also how the fortunes of the different groups of characters are carried along separately for a period till they all converge at some one climactic point.

10. Enumerate the various motives of the various people which make the complications of this story. At what points do these motives cross or unite to create action? What element of chance enters the story, sometimes defeating the plans of the characters? Point out places where chance is used at a dramatic moment to arrest or change the action of the story.

11. Make a list of the episodes unfolding the plot, of the most striking scenes in the novel, of the purely preparatory or transitional scenes, and of the scenes which serve mainly to enrich the picture or to give additional reality to the setting. Point out some scenes which, although they add nothing to the plot, are among the best in the book.

12. Show how the story illustrates the manners and customs of a

time far different from our own. Investigate in this connection such things as descriptions of buildings (Torquilstone, Coningsburgh, Rotherwood); interiors (Cedric's dining hall, Rowena's room, the turret chamber, Isaac's dungeon, the interior of Isaac's home); ejaculations, salutations, Saints invoked, turns of speech, allusions; classes of society (nobility, knights, outlaws, jesters, peasants, serfs, etc.); dress (Rowena, Rebecca, Cedric, Wamba, Gurth, etc.); modes of travel; amusements; outlaws; treatment of Jews; arms and armor; superstitions; drinking and eating; jesters; pilgrims; secret societies; corruptions; chivalry; feudal system; knights and combats; education; castles; heralds; laws and punishments.

13. Make a list of the word pictures of places, people, and scenes which would make effective tableaux.

14. Characterize the following, using phrases from the book which reveal appearance and character:

a. Gurth	*e.* Cedric	*i.* Rebecca	*m.* Richard
b. Wamba	*f.* Rowena	*j.* DeBracy	*n.* Athelstane
c. Ivanhoe	*g.* Prince John	*k.* Friar Tuck	*o.* Ulrica
d. Brian	*h.* Isaac	*l.* Locksley	

Show how each is introduced into the story; how dismissed; how revealed. Are they remarkable as human portraits or as figures in a bright colored tapestry of events? (Explain) Which are most romantically appealing? Which are representative of a class? Which one is most human?

15. Show that the attention is not divided evenly among the three groups of characters—that is, that some are more interesting than others even though their part in the story does not warrant such interest.

16. Are the three main episodes of equal interest or are they arranged in the order of climax? What effect does this have on the structure of the book?

17. Is *Ivanhoe* interesting mainly for its story, for its setting, for its characters, or for its panorama of history?

18. How much time is consumed in the action of the story?

19. How are the characters and events made to seem part of a canvas on which great events are painted—events which make up the whole history of Europe of that time? What great ambitions, ideals, changes, wars, political plottings, institutions and orders of men, and classes of society exist in the background of *Ivanhoe* so

that the story seems a part of the background rather than a projection from it?

20. Examine Scott's style for signs of haste and carelessness; for lack of finish and delicacy; for theatricality of dialogue; for ability to make descriptions bring out the salient features of a scene; for detail in description; for long sentences.

21. Compare *Ivanhoe* with *The Rise of Silas Lapham* or *Silas Marner* to illustrate the difference between the romantic and the realistic point of view.

D. *Quentin Durward,* by Sir Walter Scott

The following questions under *Kidnapped* and *Ivanhoe* may be adapted to *Quentin Durward:*

a. Under *Ivanhoe:* 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 (with changes of illustrations), 13, 14 (with changes of characters), 17, 18, 20.
b. Under *Kidnapped:* 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 12.

In addition to these the following may prove useful:

1. Use *Quentin Durward* as an illustration for the following terms:

a. plot	*d.* dénouement	*g.* principal and subordinate characters
b. episode	*e.* sub-plot	*h.* static and kinetic characters
c. incident	*f.* climax	*i.* motives and reactions of characters

2. *Quentin Durward* is a twofold story—that is, it develops two plots, one about Louis, the other about Quentin. Show how the two are united, at what points they diverge, at what points we leave one to take up the other, and at what points they converge again. What percentage of the book is given to each story? Is the interest in one greater than in the other? Do we ever feel that we are dropping one story to read another as we go from one to the other or is the interest in each inseparably associated? Are the plot-elements as successfully combined as they are in *Ivanhoe?* Is the transfer of interest from one story to the other detrimental to the interest in the story as a whole?

3. In this story which characters seem more real, the historical or the imaginary? Which individuals seem to you best delineated? Are the men or the women more truly drawn?

4. Which characters should you most like to meet in real life? Explain your answer.

5. Are Scott's characters superficially or profoundly true to life?

6. Use examples from this book to illustrate an essay on Scott's descriptive method.

7. What are Scott's favorite methods of revealing character?

8. Do you consider the method of narration of this book completely successful?

9. Discuss the title of the book.

10. Which scenes or characters should you like to know more about? Which scenes could you well spare? Are there any scenes omitted which you should like to have included?

11. What is the effect of having many chapters given over to interviews?

12. What can you learn from the book about the history of France in the fifteenth century?

13. About what characters in history does this book make you wish to know more?

14. In what particulars and by what means does this book—or any other historical novel by Scott—recreate the past for us?

15. Which scenes in this book should you most like to see illustrated?

16. Using *Ivanhoe*, *Quentin Durward*, *The Talisman*, and *Kenilworth* as examples write an essay on one of the following topics:

a. The variety and richness of the Waverley Novels.
b. Scott's ability to recreate the past.
c. What to expect in a novel by Scott.
d. Historical characters I have come to know through Scott.
e. Adventure in Scott's novels.
f. The objectivity of Scott's characters.
g. Outdoor life in Scott.
h. Trial scenes, battles, interviews, climaxes in Scott.
i. Picturesque characters in Scott.

17. How does this book illustrate the theory that "Romance is not to have something happen every moment, but to make you think that something is going to happen"?

18. Discuss the following critical opinions of *Quentin Durward:*

a. "It has the merit of telling a thoroughly entertaining story, and the characters of Louis XI and Charles are drawn with great insight and power." W. H. Hudson.
b. "In a sense it is perhaps the best of the Waverley Novels. It is far beyond them all in construction. In it, all hastens to the

conclusion through scenes, gorgeous, stimulating, and in accord with historical truth of manners and event." Andrew Lang.

c. "Quentin's meeting with the king and his rescue from Tristan; the interview between Louis and Crèvecoeur, Louis and the Astrologer; the journey; the sack of Schonwaldt, and the feast of the Boar of Ardennes; Louis in the lion's den at Peronne, those are things that are simply of the first order." George Saintsbury.

19. For *Ivanhoe, Quentin Durward, Kidnapped, Treasure Island,* or any historical novel, pictures from illustrated editions, photographs and drawings of costumes, scenery, places, or people described in the story are useful teaching material. It is sometimes possible to have the class make a scrapbook of all such material available.

E. *Silas Marner,* by George Eliot

1. Write an essay on the element of character in *Silas Marner,* discussing such details as the division between principal and subordinate characters, the use of subordinate characters, the motives and reactions of Silas, Godfrey, and Nancy, the methods of character portrayal, examples of static and kinetic characters, the extent to which the story hinges on character.

2. Write an essay on problems of human life as presented in *Silas Marner.* In it you might discuss such subjects as the novelist's reasons for trying to present such problems; the specific problems of faith, of attempted evasion of moral responsibility, of the influence of human beings on one another (all these problems are presented in this story); and the ethical significance of the novel as a presentation of these problems.

3. Write an essay on the interaction of plot, character, and setting in *Silas Marner.* Comment on the nature of these elements in any novel before you proceed to a specific discussion of the influence of plot on character, of setting on plot, of setting on character, and of character on plot in this story.

4. Write an essay on the influence of chance and character in *Silas Marner.* Discuss the part played by chance in stories and in real life; the reasons why the best stories grow out of character; the influence of chance and character in this particular story.

5. Discuss the style of *Silas Marner*. Notice George Eliot's fondness for abstract comment, her tendency to heaviness of language and sentence structure, her humor, her power of creating emotion, her descriptive method, her restraint and simplicity at crises, her sincerity, her use of figurative language, etc.

6. Discuss George Eliot's point of view and her personality as revealed in this story. Find examples of her sympathy with human weakness and inconsistency combined with her stern and clear-sighted recognition of moral responsibility; of her interest in man's inward life; of her interest in people of simple birth and humble surroundings; of her fondness for children and her understanding of them; of her humor; of her interest in moral difficulties.

7. What can you learn from *Silas Marner* of the technique of plot construction? How does the book begin? Is the method necessary and effective? What is the antecedent action? Is it important for what follows? How is suspense secured? Which are the obligatory scenes? What is the climax? How does the author work to and from the climax? How is the subplot interwoven with the main plot? Is the ending to each logical and satisfactory? How does the author prepare the reader for the final outcome?

8. Write an essay on the element of setting in *Silas Marner*. Discuss its importance; show how it is revealed; discuss the use of description and the influence of setting on character and plot.

9. How should you arrange *Silas Marner* for production as a moving picture? Which scenes should you include? Which scenes should you omit? Explain. Where should you place dramatic moments and how should you work to and from them? What changes in sequence or emphasis should you make? Why? To which characters should you give most emphasis? How should you do this? With which settings should you take most pains? What details of grouping and lighting should you try to make most effective? How should you do this?

10. Write an essay on the theme of the Silas plot and the theme of the Godfrey plot, showing how the story illustrates the theme.

11. What is the philosophy of life taught by this story?

12. Discuss in detail George Eliot's observation of human nature, particularly in minor matters, stating at each point whether or not her observation coincides with your own.

13. Write a brief essay explaining how the threads of the story are interwoven.

14. Discuss the humor of *Silas Marner*.

15. Discuss, with quotations, examples, and illustrations, the truth of George Eliot's comments on life.

16. Discuss the motivation of the book.

17. Discuss the use of description in *Silas Marner*.

18. Write an essay on *Silas Marner* as a picture of life. Discuss its "truth to life" in character, events, dialogue, problems; in the author's comments on life; in ethical vision.

19. What effect, if any, has *Silas Marner* had upon your ideas and opinions, on your observation of human nature? Be specific in your answer; use illustrations.

20. Write an essay on the evidences of truth, sincerity, and sympathy in *Silas Marner*.

21. Discuss the influence of the characters on one another in *Silas Marner*.

22. Which of the characters are typical, in a sense representative of their kind?

23. The following exercise under other books may be adapted to *Silas Marner:*

a. Kidnapped: 2, 7, 9, 12, 17
b. Ivanhoe: 10, 12 (with different illustrations), 13, 14 (with different characters), 15, 18, 21
c. Quentin Durward: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 15

F. *The House of the Seven Gables,* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

1. State the theme of this book. Show how the story illustrates the theme.

2. Is the struggle which makes up the plot a moral one or an external one? Explain.

3. Investigate the proportion of narration and description. Why is so much description used? Point out definite scenes or passages which would lose much of their effect if the description were omitted. Are any parts of the book over-described? Write an essay on the use of description in *The House of the Seven Gables*.

4. Of the six main characters which are the most real? Why? Which, if any, seem a bit machine-made, that is, more the result of the exigencies of the plot than of the complexities of human nature? Do any seem not clearly defined?

5. What are Hawthorne's favorite means of revealing character? Find all the places which are devoted mainly to characterization

and see what method predominates. What method does he use least successfully? Explain. Explain in detail the means by which Clifford's character is revealed. Are the characters individualized or typical?

6. Is Hawthorne most interested in the plot, the characters, the setting, or the theme of the story? Explain your answer. In which of these elements do you think the novel had its origin in his mind?

7. Compare this book with one of Hawthorne's short stories—*Ethan Brand*, *The Birthmark*, *Rappaccini's Daughter*, *The White Old Maid*, *Dr. Heidegger's Experiment*, *Feathertop*, or *The Great Stone Face*. What similarities of style, point of view, subject matter, characterization, and artistic emphasis do you find? In each case is it plot, character, theme, or setting that most interests him? What aspects of human experience seem to occupy his earnest attention?

8. Write an essay on the style of *The House of the Seven Gables*. Find examples of Hawthorne's fondness for figure of speech. Which figures predominate? Does he use words of poetic suggestion? Make a list of phrases or sentences which seem to you chosen with imaginative insight. Find examples of symbolism. Why does symbolism seem a natural part of Hawthorne's method of treating his subject matter? Can you find symbolism in his short stories? Can you find examples to show that he paints what he sees with loving detail as if he were an artist in miniature? Point out details in his descriptions that prove him to have been a close observer. Find examples of his fondness for moralizing, of his ever-present sense of the moral significance of things. Find examples of irony. Characterize his humor. Is it ever combined with pathos? Has the book any passages of dramatic power?

9. Write an essay on the use of the mysterious and the supernatural in this book.

10. What are the chief methods of creating suspense in this story? Find examples of foreshadowing, of effective chapter endings, of climax, of withheld information. Does the plot warrant the somewhat elaborate atmosphere of mystery which is thrown over it?

11. Write an essay on the use of description in this book to create atmosphere and to reflect mood. Find the descriptive passages which help to create mood. Which of them seem to you most striking? To what extent do the descriptive passages foreshadow and illuminate the action?

12. Notice Hawthorne's fondness for repeating phrases and for

piling up emphasis on certain details in order to suggest the underlying significance of what is happening. Compare his method in this with the use of "leit-motifs" in an opera. What significant details about the setting, the facial expressions, or the personal peculiarities of the characters, the symbolic use of certain tangible objects, tones of voice, gait, gesture, etc., are given special emphasis and repeated until the reader realizes that they have an underlying significance?

13. Find examples of Hawthorne's fondness for making the dress of characters suggest their personality. In what does this device resemble his use of other tangible means to suggest intangible ideas and feelings (*e. g.* Alice's posies, the well, the picture, the harpsichord, the chickens, etc.)?

14. Make a list of the six main characters, and then select from the book the phrases which best describe their outward appearance, the comments which best reveal their inward characters, and the figures of speech which present them most vividly to the reader's imagination.

15. Show how five of the characters are intimately connected with the theme of the story. What part does each have in working it out?

16. What purposes are served by Uncle Venner and by the introduction of the story of Alice Pyncheon?

17. Discuss Holgrave as a satisfactory hero.

18. What characteristics have Phœbe and Hepzibah that make them appealing? Which do you admire the more?

19. Discuss the humor of the book. What passages best illustrate the peculiar quality of Hawthorne's humor? In what ways does his humor resemble his turn of mind in other respects?

20. Discuss the effectiveness and verisimilitude of the dialogue. Compare it with the dialogue in *The Rise of Silas Lapham.*

21. Select ten passages of author's comment which seem to you true or interesting or both. Explain in your own words what you think they mean and what their application to the story is. Give examples to show their truth or falsity as observations on life in general.

22. What particular things about this book mark it as characteristic of the romantic rather than the realistic point of view?

23. It has been said that Hawthorne put more of himself into this book than into any of his others. If that is true, what sort of man should you imagine Hawthorne to have been? Are there traces of

Puritan ancestry, or of New England ways of thought? How does the book indicate a preoccupation with moral questions, especially that of sin and its consequences? What indication is there that the author was a close and loving but retiring observer of life? What shows him to have been somewhat out of touch with the actual world of fact? Are there indications that he was of a sensitive, imaginative nature? that he was a lover of the beautiful? Characterize him as you think he is revealed by his work.

G. *A Tale of Two Cities*, by Charles Dickens

Exercise A under Chapter IV may be used for detailed study of *A Tale of Two Cities*. Other exercises which may easily be adapted are:

Exercises at the end of Chapter IV, B and C: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17

Exercises under *Kidnapped:* 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
" " *Ivanhoe:* 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
" " *Quentin Durward:* 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18
Silas Marner: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 16, 21, 22
" " *The House of the Seven Gables:* 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 14, 21

H. *The Idylls of the King*, by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

The following exercises at the end of Chapter III are especially applicable to *The Idylls of the King:*

Exercise 1 (Substitute for the poem quoted any Idyll)
" 3 " " " " " " "
" 4 " " " " " " "
" 6 (Make similar collections of your own from the *Idylls*)
" 7 (Make similar collections of figures of speech from the *Idylls*)
" 16 (Choose passages from the *Idylls*)

1. Find passages in the *Idylls* which express feelings you yourself have felt. Find passages that could appeal only to a certain class of readers. Find passages that would appeal to any one. How great a range of feeling is there in the poems? How many means of creating feeling? Find examples of mood created through sound, through images, through the power of words, through restraint.

2. Study the *Idylls* from the point of view of sound alone. Find examples of sound used to create various moods. Is the effect of each one due to the meter, to the combination of vowel and consonant sounds, or both? Find examples of onomatopœia. Is the onomatopœia deliberately imitative or suggestive? Read aloud particularly fine examples of tone color. Is the tone color due to rhyme, alliteration, deep toned and open vowels, liquids and sibilants, or to combinations of these devices?

3. Paraphrase these passages from the *Idylls* carefully, noticing particularly how the thought is carried from line to line. Point out thought divisions. Is the thought expressed directly or through allegory, suggestion, images, or symbols?

a. King Arthur to Sir Bedivere: *The Passing of Arthur*, 408–423
b. King Arthur on the quest for the Grail: *The Holy Grail*, 869–915
c. Sir Tristram on the vows of the Round Table: *The Last Tournament*, 650–698

In each case comment on the truth or falsity of the ideas, illustrating by comment or examples from your own experience or the experience of people you know about.

4. Write an essay on Tennyson as an observer and painter of Nature, using the *Idylls* as examples. You should point out the purposes for which Tennyson introduces nature-pictures into the poems (to create mood, for example), his use of them in similes, the beauty of the pictures in themselves, the evidence that he was a close observer of nature, the aspects of nature in which he was most interested, the value of the pictures to the poems.

5. Write an essay on the ideals of the *Idylls*. Cite as examples ideals of government, of religion, of chivalry, of courtesy, of obedience, of honor, etc.

6. Write an essay on the *Idylls* as paintings and tableaux, showing how certain of the scenes have the qualities of color, lighting, grouping, etc., that make up a beautiful painting.

7. Investigate the use which Tennyson made of Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*. How and why did he change material to suit his needs? What are the chief differences in Tennyson's and Malory's methods of treating the same stories?

8. Discuss the songs in the *Idylls*. What artistic purpose do they serve? In what are they like one another? Which are best?

9. Analyze the blank verse of the *Idylls*. Notice the use of end-stopped and run-on lines, cesuras, variations from the normal iambic pentameter line, adaptations of meter to subject matter,

etc. Find passages which seem to you especially skillful; others which seem involved, labored, commonplace.

10. Investigate the use which musicians, painters, and poets have made of the Arthurian Legend. What great paintings could be used as illustrations for the *Idylls?* What great works of music might supply motifs for certain passages? What poems by other authors might be compared with the *Idylls?*

I. *The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers,* by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele

1. Take any four of these essays and show how they illustrate the four characteristics of the essay as explained in Chapter VI. Make these four essays the basis of a theme of four paragraphs on What the Essay Is.

2. Use the de Coverley Papers as illustrative material for a theme on the subject matter of the eighteenth century essay. Find in them examples of both satirical and serious comment on the follies and vices of society, on political problems, on popular beliefs and superstitions, on education, on contemporary ideals, on animals, on popular literature, on travel, on the theater, etc.

3. Compare an individual essay from *The de Coverley Papers* with an individual essay of the 19th or 20th century which is similar to it in subject matter but different in style, atmosphere, point of view, treatment, etc. To what extent do these differences show how times, manners, and ways of thinking have changed? Does the comparison reveal some things that have not changed?

4. Compare Addison's Essay on Westminster Abbey with Washington Irving's in *The Sketch Book.* Compare also the way both authors deal with the subject of a stage coach journey. Which author's writing do you prefer? What differences in personality do you find? in style? in attitude toward the subject matter? in interests? in purpose? Do you think that Irving's essay could have been written in the time of Queen Anne?

5. If the essay expresses the personality of the author, what sort of man is revealed by the de Coverley papers which Addison wrote? Do they reveal a personality different from Steele's? from Irving's? from Lamb's? Why is the difference between Addison and Steele not more marked in the essays?

6. Find in the essays examples of anecdotes from classical sources

used to illustrate what to the authors were contemporary instances; of classical names used to represent typical 18th century characters; of imaginary characters used to represent a special class of society; of allusions to contemporary celebrities or events; of humor used as a graceful cloak for serious purpose; of evident effort to spare the individual but attack the fault; of impartiality; of frankness so carefully expressed as to hurt no one. Find essays which begin with humorous anecdotes or comments and close with a serious observation. Use these examples as illustrative material in a theme on the method of treatment in the de Coverley papers.

7. Find ten de Coverley papers which show an evident desire for reform. State in one sentence the purpose of each. What is the method of attack used in each case? In what respect were the weapons used particularly adapted to the nature of the warfare?

8. Name some of our contemporary periodicals which carry out the *Spectator* idea. Take *Life* as an example. In any issue of *Life* point out attacks on contemporary abuses, follies, and manners through satire and ridicule rather than through invective. Compare special aspects of *Life* with special aspects of the *Spectator* papers, commenting on and accounting for similarities and differences.

9. What aspects of life in the 18th century are revealed in the de Coverley papers? For instance, what do they tell you about men and women of fashion, about popular literature, about gardens and country life, about sports and amusements, about religion, about politics, about superstitions, about classes of society, etc.? Which papers reveal each of these? Write a long theme on the life of the eighteenth century as revealed in the de Coverley papers.

10. Consider the de Coverley papers as examples of prose fiction. What elements possessed by all stories do they show? What do they need to make them examples of prose fiction instead of essays? Can you convert some of the characters, events, or general situations of the papers into a short story of your own?

11. Characterize Sir Roger in detail. What are the chief traits of his character? In which essays are these most strikingly revealed? To what extent does his character account for the enduring charm of the papers?

12. Write a series of *Spectator* papers of your own, attacking follies of your school or community. Be sure that each one imitates a special de Coverley paper.

J. *The Sketch Book*, by Washington Irving

1. Make a list of the places, objects, scenes, incidents, and people in *The Sketch Book* in which Irving seems especially interested. What is the source of his interest in each? Do any of the things in which he is interested reveal definite traits in his character or aspects of his personality? What sort of people interest him most? places? Find evidence of his special interests in literature, of his attitude toward nature, of his ideas of humor or pathos, of his geniality, of his appreciative but somewhat superficial powers of observation.

2. Make a list of the memorable characters of *The Sketch Book*. Which types of people does Irving describe with special zest? What is his usual method of characterization? Does he ever go far beneath the surface of his characters? Is he fond of regarding them as types (representative of some particular class), or is he interested in them as individuals? In what ways are the people in *The Sketch Book* similar to such characters in his short stories as Rip Van Winkle and Ichabod Crane? Write an essay on the typical Sketch-Book character.

3. What qualities make Irving an ideal traveller? What passages in *The Sketch Book* illustrate these qualities? Write an essay on an ideal travelling companion using Irving as your example.

4. How would Jaques in *As You Like It* have described the Christmas festivities at Bracebridge Hall? Try to rewrite the Christmas Day essay in the style of Addison, or the *Sunday with Sir Roger* essay in the style of Irving.

5. Imagine yourself a twentieth century Washington Irving, visiting your city or school; write your experiences and observations, making sure that you notice the things which he would have noticed, and that you express yourself in his style.

6. Study the essay on *The Country Church*. In what ways is it typical of Irving? Why do the setting and atmosphere of this essay appeal to him? Is the episode one that only a subtle observer would notice? Are the conclusions he draws original or profound?

7. Write an essay on Irving and Shakespeare, naming all the allusions to Shakespeare in *The Sketch Book*, the plays and characters of which Irving seems especially fond, and the chief reasons why Shakespeare was a favorite with him.

8. Make a study of Irving's descriptions. Notice especially his use of unexpected comparisons, his fondness for emphasizing salient

details, his tendency to exaggerate, his use of specific words, his care to keep his point of view clear in the reader's mind, and his clear-cut paragraphing.

9. Analyze Irving's humor; that is, point out the sort of things that seem humorous to him, the particular ways by which he tries to make the reader see the humor, and the special characteristics of his humor. Does it resemble the humor of any other author you know? Compare the humor of Irving with that of Addison, Lamb, Dickens, Hawthorne, George Eliot, Stevenson, Lewis Carroll, Barrie.

10. Study the ideas in *The Sketch Book.* What are the principal things that Irving has to say? Are they usually true? original? profound? subtle? commonplace? Do they show him as a deep, original thinker like Emerson? or as a somewhat conventional but genial and cultivated gentleman who was content not to go beyond generally accepted truths? Support your statements with examples.

K. *Speech on Conciliation with the American Colonies,* by Edmund Burke

1. What are the two main divisions of Burke's speech? What are the principal subdivisions under each of these two?

2. Divide the speech as well as you can into an introduction, a statement of the question, a discussion of the issue involved (the main argument), a refutation, and an oratorical close. In which of these parts is the organization most clear and the argument most convincing? Why? Comment on the oratorical close—its length, eloquence, and effectiveness.

3. What are the two principal reasons Burke gives for conciliation? What arguments does he use in support of these?

4. The second part of his argument is given over mainly to a presentation of his own plan, and the answering of objections. What, briefly, was his plan? What were the chief objections he foresaw and tried to answer? Which of his answers to objections seem to you irrefutable?

5. At what point does he present his plan? What are the six propositions upon which it rests? What are the six corollaries to these? Do these corollaries inevitably follow if the propositions are accepted? Explain your answer. State this part of the argument in the form of a geometrical theorem.

6. What was the plan of "the noble lord in the blue ribbon?"

What are Burke's objections to this plan? Analyze closely this part of his argument, pointing out what seem to you its strong and weak points.

7. Did Burke's plan depend as much on the Colonies' acceptance as on Parliament's? What reasons, if any, had Parliament for supposing that the Colonies would accept his plan? Has the plan or any part of it been tried since?

8. How does Burke try to gain the sympathy of his audience at the start? Do you regard his efforts as successful?

9. What comparison does he draw between his own record and that of Parliament on the question of colonial policies? Why does he make such a comparison?

10. Find four statements supported with indisputable evidence. Do any of these form an important part of the argument?

11. Find at least two extremely important theorems that Burke proved beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt. Do you think that these two alone ought to have won his case? Explain.

12. Find three statements for which Burke gives no direct evidence, and explain why no direct evidence is given.

13. Find an example of argument by analogy. What qualities must this form of argument possess to be convincing? Why is Burke's use of this method convincing?

14. Find an example of argument by elimination, by deduction, by antecedent probability, and by sign. Which of these seems to you most forceful? Write a brief argument of your own developed exclusively by one of these methods.

15. State three of his arguments in syllogistic form. What special dangers confront most reasoning in this form? Illustrate by examples.

16. Find examples of climax, contrast, parallel structure, repetition for effect, irony. Write paragraphs of your own either imitating these or using the same devices in your own way.

17. Find examples of Burke's eloquence, of his sincerity, of his learning, of his philosophical turn of mind, of his conservatism, of his moral earnestness, of his imaginative and emotional power.

18. Find five maxims well worth the attention of men in public life.

19. Find evidences of Burke's tendency to consider causes and effects before arriving at conclusions.

20. Find topic sentences, transitional sentences, summaries.

21. What would the Colonies have regarded as the most serious

defect in Burke's plan? Did the plan recognize the chief ground of their complaint against England? If this plan had been accepted, what would have been the effect upon America?

22. Compare Burke's oratorical style with Webster's, Lincoln's, Woodrow Wilson's. Note the similarities and the differences and account for as many of them as you can in as many ways as you can.

23. Locate, illustrate, and discuss:

a. "Public calamity is a mighty leveler."
b. "Refined policy ever has been the parent of confusion."
c. "Genuine simplicity of heart is a healing and cementing principle."
d. "All Protestantism is a form of dissent."
e. "In large bodies the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities."
f. "I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people."
g. "The claim of privilege implies a superior power."
h. "The march of the human mind is slow."
i. "Abstract liberty, like other abstractions, is not to be found."
j. "Parties must ever exist in a free country."
k. "All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter."
l. "Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest, and not on metaphysical speculations."

24. Analyze, paraphrase, and discuss on the basis of your own experience the following paragraphs:

a. Paragraph 123: "I do not know that the colonies have, in any general way," etc.
b. Paragraph 142: "All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical," etc.
c. Paragraph 10: "My idea is nothing more," etc.
d. " 44: "Three thousand miles of ocean lie between," etc.
e. " 60: "At this proposition I must pause," etc.
f. " 61: "Perhaps, Sir, I am mistaken in my idea," etc.

L. *Life of Samuel Johnson*, by Thomas Babington Macaulay

1. What were the chief traits of character, temperament, mind, and body of Johnson in his boyhood and youth? Which of these

persisted in his later life? Trace the development of three of his most striking characteristics from boyhood to old age. Which of these characteristics had the most significant effect upon his life?

2. What explanation can you give for Johnson's affection for Mrs. Porter?

3. State the effect that Johnson's struggle for existence in London had upon his manners, disposition, character, and attitude toward life. Are there any other external circumstance which molded his character? Can you cite examples of other men whose characters were strongly influenced by their environment?

4. Using Johnson as an example, write an essay on environment and character.

5. What prejudices especially influenced Johnson's judgments of people, parties, literature, religion, nationalities, etc.? Can you account for any of these by his peculiar psychology or his special experiences? Make a study of the influence of prejudice in Johnson's life. Compare him in this respect with Irving or Goldsmith. What do you think are the disadvantages of limiting your mind by strong prejudices?

6. Who were Johnson's early friends? In what ways were they like and unlike him? What mutual attractions in each case would account for the friendship? What do you consider the essentials for an ideal friendship? Investigate the friendships of other literary men, for instance, Tennyson and Hallam, Carlyle and Emerson, Carlyle and Tennyson, Shelley and Byron, Keats and Leigh Hunt, Addison and Steele, Raleigh and Spenser, the Brownings and Landor. Write an essay on literary friendships.

7. Explain in detail the reasons why Garrick and Johnson both attracted and repelled each other.

8. Make a special investigation of the character, career, and personality of David Garrick.

9. State the chief merits and faults, and the chief reasons for the popularity of:

a. The Rambler
b. The Dictionary
c. Rasselas
d. The Lives of the Poets

10. Why was Johnson's edition of Shakespeare a failure?

11. Explain the charm of Johnson's conversation. How is it that he dominated the many distinguished men in his club? Why was his influence as a conversationalist greater than his influence as a writer? Read in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* accounts of some of his

conversational triumphs. Bring to class some striking examples from Boswell. Find examples of his brilliancy in conversation and also of his brutality. In this connection read Max Beerbohm's essay, *A Clergyman*.

12. Investigate the career of each member of Johnson's club. Write a report on each.

13. Give an account of Johnson's intimacy with the Thrales from the point of view of the Thrales. (See Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*.) In what ways is the story altered when it is told from another angle than Macaulay's?

14. Use Mrs. Thrale as an illustration of Macaulay's occasional unfairness in biography.

15. Give an account of the journey to the Hebrides showing the benefits Johnson derived from it.

16. Investigate the story of Johnson and Boswell for yourself, going directly to the sources.

17. Write an essay on Johnson as revealed in Macaulay's account of his life. By what means does Macaulay make him seem real? What special follies, virtues, inconsistencies, peculiarities, prejudices, etc., has he which stamp him as lovable, exasperating, admirable, reprehensible? Are most people free from these qualities? What seems to you the most human thing about Johnson?

18. Find in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* some of Johnson's most characteristic opinions. Comment on each. Why is it especially characteristic? Do you agree with it?

19. Apply to Macaulay's *Life of Dr. Johnson* the exercises at the end of the section on biography in Chapter VI of this book.

20. Characterize in some detail Macaulay's style. Illustrate with quotations. Find examples of short, forceful sentences, of strong contrasts, of concrete illustrations, of balance (of nouns, adjectives, phrases, sentences), of rapid detail, of logical paragraph development, of climax, of topic sentences, of skillful transitions, of hyperbole.

21. Compare this essay with Macaulay's *Addison*, *Madame D'Arblay*, *Clive*, or *Warren Hastings*. Find examples of striking similarities. Quote passages that seem parallel to passages in *The Life of Dr. Johnson*.

M. A study of *Macbeth* as drama

1. Write an essay on the atmosphere of *Macbeth*, stating first what that atmosphere is, and then showing how it is created. Pay

special attention to such devices as the heaping up impressions of darkness and night, of sleeplessness, of hovering evil, of blood. Underline in red the references to blood, in black those to night and darkness, in green those to sleep and sleeplessness.

2. Make a study of the lighting of the play. Make plans, directions, sketches for the arrangement of lights and shadows in the scenes listed below, for the use of colors in scenery and in costumes, for the placing of the characters in light or shadow. Try not to omit anything that would intensify the unified effect of the atmosphere and arouse the imagination of the spectator through color, light, and darkness.

a. Act I, scene 1
b. " I, " 3
c. " I, " 5
d. " I, " 6
e. " I, " 7
f. " II, " 1
g. Act II, scene 2
h. " II, " 3
i. " III, " 3
j. " III, " 4
k. " IV, " 1
l. " IV, " 2
m. Act V, scene 1

Do not forget that you can gain effects of climax, contrast, and symbolic suggestiveness by light and color as well as by other devices.

3. Make a study of the use of sound in *Macbeth.* Which scenes should you fill with clamor and excitement? When should you have quiet so deep as to give effect to slight sounds? Where should you have sudden sound crash unexpectedly to heighten dramatic effect? What sounds of nature should you use? Where? In which passages should you rely wholly on the sound of the human voice for effect?

4. Make a study of the use of movement in *Macbeth.* Arrange the characters as you would have them on the stage in the scenes listed below. How should you arrange their crossings and recrossings, their exits and entrances, their soliloquies and asides, so far as movement alone is concerned? Upon what gestures should you lay most stress? Mark passages in the play for appropriate gestures for suiting "the action to the word," for suggested stillness or confused motion, for insane fury, for pathetic weariness, for abject terror, for rhythmic movement—all to be secured chiefly through motion.

a.	Act	I,	scene 3	*h.*	Act	III,	scene 4
b.	"	I,	" 5	*i.*	"	IV,	" 1
c.	"	I,	" 7	*j.*	"	IV,	" 2
d.	"	II,	" 1	*k.*	"	V,	" 1
e.	"	II,	" 2	*l.*	"	V,	" 3
f.	"	II,	" 3	*m.*	"	V,	" 5
g.	"	III,	" 2	*n.*	"	V,	" 8

5. Make a study of the use of facial expression, gesture, and tone of voice in *Macbeth.* Mark certain passages for facial expressions and gestures which you think are implied in the text or which you think would be effective. Mark passages in which expression, gesture, and tone of voice are clearly indicated in the text. Investigate the history of the stage presentation of this play and see what use of these devices has been made by famous actors and actresses. Do you think that professional make-up is needed to mark the change that comes over Macbeth as the play progresses? What particular moods or traits of character should you bring out by these devices? Do you think that greater effect is made by many or few gestures? Do the parts in this play require ability to use the voice with great variety of tone and pitch? At what points do actors have to consider other parts than their own in this play in order to make contrast or similarity apparent by means of these devices?

6. Investigate the practical difficulties of presenting a play in Shakespeare's day. Point out the scenes and passages which show directly the influence of the stage conditions of the time. Which of these difficulties do you think would most have affected the presentation of *Macbeth?* Contrast the presentation of this play on the Elizabethan stage and on the modern stage.

7. Find all the things in *Macbeth* that would have pleased an Elizabethan audience. Are there any remarks put in to please any particular part of the audience? How does a study of the play from this angle help to determine the probable date of its composition?

8. Discuss the opportunities for the actor in *Macbeth.* Was any special attention paid to the actor's point of view in the writing of this play?

9. Examine carefully the structure of *Macbeth.* It is the shortest of Shakespeare's tragedies—so short that some critics have thought some of it to be lost. Do you think that anything essential to the action is missing? Are there any scenes which you should like to

have included in it? Are there any digressions? any places where the action halts? Which scene seems to receive undue emphasis in proportion to what it contributes to plot and character? The scene of the murder of Lady Macduff has been criticized as an unnecessary introduction of brutality. Do you agree with this criticism? Why? or why not? If this scene is omitted, what is lost to the play? The speeches of Hecate and the dialogue connected with them are by some critics attributed to another author than Shakespeare. Is this because of their inferior style? Do you think them structurally necessary to the play? Where is the inciting force of the play? the preliminary exposition? Which scenes comprise the rising action? Where is the climax? Which scenes comprise the falling action? Where is the catastrophe? Point out what each act and scene contributes to plot, character, setting, and theme. What is your judgment of the dramatic structure as a whole? Draw a diagram illustrating the structure of *Macbeth*.

10. Comment on the beginning of *Macbeth*, on the use of minor crises, on the plot complications and the way in which they are worked out.

11. Write an essay on the three especially effective devices for securing dramatic emphasis in this play:

a. the use of contrast
b. the use of irony
c. the iteration of certain words, phrases, and ideas

12. Show how the outward and inward (that is, the moral and physical) struggles in this play are inseparable at every point.

13. What is the most impressive moral lesson of the play?

14. Show how the action proceeds out of the characters—that is, it is determined by them, rather than they by it. Is the motivation always natural? (Consider here the flight of Malcolm and Donalbain, and Malcolm's scene with Macduff in England.)

15. Discuss the use of the supernatural in this play.

16. Is the banquet scene inevitable, climactic, strongly emotional, decisive? Discuss each point. (See Chapter V for the qualities of a good climax.)

17. Find in this play scenes used for dramatic emphasis (see Chapter V), for contrast, for relief, for foreshadowing, for conveying information, for establishing character, for suggesting a lapse of time.

18. Discuss the use of subordinate characters in this play. Are

they strikingly or faintly delineated? For what special purposes are these characters used?

a. Macduff	*d.* Malcolm	*g.* the Gentlewoman
b. Ross	*e.* Duncan	*h.* the Doctor
c. Lenox	*f.* the old man	*i.* Lady Macduff

Which seem to you more human, Ross, Lenox, Malcolm, and their group, or the less important group consisting of the Gentlewoman, the Doctor, and Lady Macduff? Characterize each of these as well as you can, using quotations. Comment on the naturalness of Lady Macduff's little son. Look up other children in the plays of Shakespeare. Can you distinguish between Ross and Lenox by their outstanding traits? What is Macduff's great scene? Why? Are there any "stock characters" (see Chapter V) in *Macbeth*?

19. Relate some dramatic scene in the play as you think one of the subordinate characters would tell it. For example, the Gentlewoman describes the sleep walking scene; Lenox tells about the ghost at the banquet; Banquo describes the meeting with the witches to Ross and Angus. In Walter de la Mare's *Henry Brocken* the Doctor gives his opinions.

20. Discuss the character of Banquo, his motives, reactions, and his moral position in the play. Read what Professor Bradley says about him in *Shakespearean Tragedy*.

21. Using the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth as examples, show the depth of Shakespeare's insight into human nature. What was the character of each at the beginning of the play? In what respects were they alike? different? Explain how their characters supplement each other. Could either have sinned so irretrievably alone? How were they regarded by others at the beginning? How far right is Lady Macbeth's analysis of her husband's nature? Is she accustomed to chastising him with her tongue? By what motives were they impelled up to the time of the murder? How did the motives of each work upon the other until the deed was done? Contrast the reactions of each immediately after the murder. Is there any indication that here for the first time Lady Macbeth feels that she does not wholly understand her husband? Compare and contrast the development of the two after the second act. Why does Macbeth plunge deeper and deeper into blood? What indications are there of Lady Macbeth's shrinking, of her unwillingness or inability to go to the same lengths? In

what respects is the development of each characteristic? What outstanding traits of each are brought out in the banquet scene? What influences outside his nature impel Macbeth to action? Is there any counterpart to the witches' influence on Macbeth in the case of Lady Macbeth? What characteristic in her takes the place of imagination in Macbeth? By what touches is the tender side of both suggested? Trace the course of Lady Macbeth's dream in the sleep walking scene. Find the source of each of her thoughts. Why is the candle by her bedside pathetic? What do you think happened to her between this scene and her death? Find all the indications of Macbeth's mental, moral, and physical degradation in the last act. What is now his attitude toward life? Is it what you would expect him to have? Are there any traces here of the man he once was? Why is the spectacle of his mental, moral, and physical ruin so impressive?

22. Take Macbeth at what you think is the decisive moment of his career; show what manner of man he was, what his position of life was, and what motives impelled him to action at this crisis. Then trace the result of this decisive action upon his later life and character, showing at each step how all might have been different had he acted differently. Can you make the same study of Lady Macbeth? Was her moment of decision before or after Macbeth's? before or after the beginning of the play? Would she have been less wicked in other circumstances?

23. Read a standard criticism on some special aspect of *Macbeth*, such as the witches, the atmosphere, the history of the play, the characters, the poetry, etc. Make a report showing exactly how this criticism has added to your understanding or appreciation of the play. What new points of view did it give you? Did you at any point disagree with the critic? Explain in detail your reactions. Here is a list of books from which to choose:

a. Alden: *Shakespeare*
b. Bradley: *Shakespearean Tragedy*
c. Brandes: *William Shakespeare*
d. Chapman: *A Glance toward Shakespeare*
e. Dowden: *Shakespeare, his Mind and Art*
f. Hazlitt: *Characters in Shakespeare's Plays.*
g. Hudson: *Lectures on Shakespeare*
h. Jameson: *Characteristics of Women*
i. Masefield: *Shakespeare*

j. Raleigh: *Shakespeare*
k. White: *Studies in Shakespeare*
l. Winter: *Shakespeare on the Stage*
m. Winter: *Shadows of the Stage*

N. A study of *Macbeth* as poetry

1. What great qualities of poetry has *Macbeth?* (use of blank verse, tone color, rhythm, figurative language, imagery, emotional power, poetic suggestion, pictures, thought translated into pictures, feeling aroused through sound, power to speak for the human race, etc.) Pick out passages remarkable for their poetic power and comment on them. (See Chapter III.) Make a list of the so-called "purple" passages. (See Chapter V.)

2. Study the language of the play. Find dialogue heightened for dramatic effect, dialogue with intrinsic value apart from its connection with the play. Find examples of obscure language, of confused imagery (due to the author's emotions while writing the lines), of simplicity, of power to use sound effectively, of extreme condensation.

3. Find passages where much is expressed in a few words.

4. Make a list of the obscure passages. Paraphrase them. Which obscurities were due to your lack of knowledge of Elizabethan English, which to obscurity in the language (mixed metaphors, extreme condensation, etc.), and which to possible corruptions of the text?

5. Study the vocabulary of the play. Find familiar words in unusual senses and unusual words expressing familiar ideas. Find Latin and Anglo Saxon words effectively combined. What proof is there in this play that Shakespeare had a wide vocabulary and that he made unusual combinations of words? Make your investigations the subject of an essay on Shakespeare's command of language.

6. How is Shakespeare's versatility illustrated in this play? (See Chapter V.) What universal human relationships, motives, feelings, experiences, are expressed here? Make a list of the passages that express things within the range of a great many people's experiences and emotions, for instance Macduff's:

> "I cannot but remember such things were,
> That were most precious to me";

and Macbeth's

> "Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care";
>
> "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow."

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